

THE
OLD MANOR HOUSE.

A
NOVEL,
IN FOUR VOLUMES.

By CHARLOTTE SMITH.

THE SECOND EDITION.

VOL. IV.

J'ai beaucoup souffert : j'ai vu souffrir d'avantage ; que
d'infortunés j'ai vu mourir ! et moi, je les ai survécu.

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NO. 10

IN FOUR VOLUMES

BY THE REV. J. H. B. H. H. H.

THE END OF THE



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CHAP. I.

IN a very few days after leaving this temporary settlement, Orlando arrived at Quebec.—He there found means to convince his Indian friend, that to permit him to go would be much more to his interest than to detain him.—But he was without money, and without clothes.—His Canadian acquaintance, however, persuaded him that, on proper application to the Governor, he would be furnished with necessaries as a British officer:—and, after encountering a few difficulties of office, he had an opportunity of submitting his situation to the then Governor; who being convinced, notwithstanding his present ap-

pearance, that he was the person whom he described himself to be, gave orders for his being received and treated as an officer in the service of his Britannic Majesty. Orlando referred himself to his Excellency for orders.—He had now no longer a regiment to return to, as that to which he belonged was one of those that had surrendered at Saratoga—Though he was not actually among those who suffered there the humiliation of laying down their arms, having been sent away with dispatches two days before, he knew not how far he was included in their captivity, or might consider himself freed by it to serve in any other regiment, or to return to Europe.

The Governor advised him to proceed to New-York, there to receive the orders of the Commander in Chief of the British forces. A small vessel was preparing to sail in about a fortnight; and in this Orlando, once more restored to the appearance of an Englishman (though much changed by the hardships he had undergone, and by the loss of his



his hair, which had been remarkably fine), embarked five weeks after his arrival at Quebec. He took leave of his Iroquois protector, with a thousand protestations of gratitude for all the services he had rendered him, and promised to remit him a present of such articles as were most acceptable, to Quebec, as soon as he returned to England, or arrived in any port where they could be obtained; and these promises he meant religiously to fulfil.

The vessel on board of which the luckless adventurer hoped to make his way to New York, was a small sloop sent with dispatches from the Governor of Quebec to the Commander in Chief; and the master, who knew the importance of his commission, took every precaution to secure the execution of it. But all were fruitless; for at some leagues distance from the mouth of the Delaware, he was seen and chased by two French frigates dispatched from the fleet of Count D'Estaing; and though he was an excel-

lent seaman, and his vessel sailed well, he found it impossible to escape.—His dispatches, however, were thrown overboard; but the sloop immediately surrendered to force which it would have been folly to have resisted, and Orlando was once more a prisoner.

His captivity was, however, much less terrible than that he had formerly sustained. He received from the French officers all those attentions which, among civilized nations, ought to soften the horrors of war. Nor was he sorry to learn that the *Fleur de Lys*, in which he was, was to return to the fleet from which she was detached, only for her last orders, and then to proceed to France.—The Chevalier de Stainville, who commanded her, made a point of testifying, by his behaviour to Orlando, his regard and respect for the English nation: divested, by the candour of his mind, and the strength of his understanding, of all national prejudice, he conceived an esteem for Orlando the moment he conversed with him; and agreed
most

most willingly to give him his parole as soon as he arrived in France (that he should not serve during the present war, either against America or France), and to assist him in returning to England, which he thought no military engagement now prevented his doing with a perfect adherence to duty and propriety.

The Fleur de Lys, after receiving her dispatches for the Court of Versailles from Count D'Estaing, proceeded with a fair wind; and in six weeks Orlando saw himself once more on European ground. He landed at Brest, and felt such sensations as are only known to those who, after having resigned all hope of ever being restored again to their friends and their country, see themselves almost within reach of all they hold dear upon earth. France, contrasted with his banishment in America, seemed to him to be part of his country, and in every Frenchman he saw, not a *natural* enemy, but a brother.

Had the Chevalier de Stainville been really so, he could not have behaved to

Orlando with more generosity, or more kindness. He was himself under the necessity of going immediately to Paris:—but he placed his English friend in the house of a merchant, whom he commissioned to supply him with every thing he might want; and recommending him also to the protection of his second captain while he remained in Brest, this generous captor took leave with regret of his interesting English prisoner—not, however, without procuring him a proper passport, giving him a certificate, and taking his parole. Orlando, eager and anxious as he was to return to his own country, had now a wish that went farther; it was to have an opportunity of renewing his acquaintance, and testifying his gratitude to this amiable officer.

He staid only a few days after him at Brest, when, taking from the merchant who was ordered to supply him, as much money as he supposed would be requisite for his journey, he set out by the diligence for St. Malo, where, he
was

was told, he might perhaps get a conveyance to Jersey or Guernsey. The name of those islands brought afresh into his mind all his fears concerning the fate of his sister Isabella: eighteen months had nearly elapsed since her departure with Warwick; and the mention made of her in Monimia's letter, dated in the following June, was the only intelligence he had received of her. Nor was this the sole mournful recollection to which Orlando was subject in his journey—It was, alas! almost as long since he had received any information relating to the destiny of his Monimia. As to the situation of his family—Gracious Heaven! how many events might in that time have occurred, any one of which would embitter, with eternal regret, his return to his native country.

At St. Malo he could not find the conveyance he sought, and therefore, journeyed along the coast in as cheap a manner as he could to Havre; but, there being no open communication now be-

tween France and England, he found the accommodation he wanted extremely difficult to obtain, and it was not till almost the end of October that he found means to engage a large fishing-bark, which under that pretence was employed in smuggling on the coast, to land him at Southampton; and this bargain was made at the price of all the money he had, with a promise of a farther reward if he arrived safely at an English port, where he doubted not but that, upon making himself known, he should find friends who would enable him to fulfil his promises. There was considerable hazard to his conductors in attempting to land at any port of Hampshire, when so many vessels lay at Portsmouth; an hazard on which they took care to insist with great vehemence, after they had got their passenger on board. Orlando, who had infinitely rather have been landed on the coast of Suffex, proposed to them to make for some part of that country; but even this proposal did not seem to please them,

them, and two of the three men appeared to be very furly and savage.

They agreed, however, to go up the Channel; and the wind, though very high, served them for the purpose. It was already night when they adopted this resolution. With the dawn of morning Orlando saw the white cliffs for which his heart had so long languished. It was, the Frenchmen told him, the back of the Isle of Wight; and Orlando whose impatience to touch English ground was redoubled, entreated them there to put him on shore; but this they refused, as they alleged that their bark would there be in the most imminent danger of being seen and seized by the vessels cruising round the island; and their only way was to haul off the English coast, and affect to be fishing. Orlando, supposing them practised in these sort of deceptions, and having no remedy even if he had not approved of their plan, submitted to do whatever they thought safest.

They kept, therefore, as near their own

coast as if they had intended landing there; but towards evening, the wind being still strong and favourable, they stretched away for the Suffex coast, and Orlando saw the land where all his hopes reposed!—He was little disposed to dispute with these men any terms they now wished to impose upon him; but he began to think them very unreasonable, when they told him that, as he must land at night, and on the open coast, he could not pay them the farther reward he had promised them on his getting safely on shore; and, therefore, they expect that he would make up to them that failure, by giving up part of his baggage. This was so little, after the casual supplies he had received at Quebec and at Brest, that, as he was now within a few miles of his home, it appeared to him no object. But if he had more tenaciously intended to preserve his little wardrobe, it could not have been attempted without rashness. He was alone, and unarmed, in the boat with three very stout fellows, who were answerable for his life

life to nobody, and who might, with safety to themselves, have thrown him overboard. He yielded, therefore, to this robbery with as good a grace as he could; and at sunset, in a stormy evening at the beginning of November, he was set on shore between Shoreham and Worthing, with two pieces of twelve fous in one pocket, which had escaped the rapacity of his piratical conductors, and a shirt in the other; his sword, which he had got at Quebec, and which was returned to him immediately by De Stainville on his being captured, his high and romantic spirit might have been unwilling to surrender to those rapacious wretches; but fortunately perhaps both for them and for himself, this his only weapon had slipped from under his arm as he was violently staggered by a sudden tossing of the boat, and to the vexation of his guides, who meant to make it their prize, it fell overboard and was irrecoverably lost. All the other articles of his little property, which they coveted, he granted them very readily:

with these petty acquisitions they hurried from the English coast, and were very soon out of sight. Orlando, who had waded through a heavy surf to the land, kissed the beloved soil the moment he reached it; and was unconscious that he was half drowned, and knew not where to lay his head. To be on English ground, to be within a few miles of his native place, was happiness he so little expected ever to have enjoyed, that the tumult of his spirits would not give him leave for some time to think of any thing else. He was, however, so breathless, and so much agitated by his bodily exertion, and the various sensations of his mind, that he sat down a moment to recollect and compose himself.

It was not yet so dark but that he knew nearly where he was; but it was necessary to proceed along the shore to some town or village, where he might procure an horse, on which he meant to hasten instantly to the Hall. The village of Worthing was the nearest to the place
where

where he wished to be. He walked therefore along the sands: but a storm from the south-west, which had been long threatening, now came on with such violence that he took the first shelter he could find, in a little alehouse built under the low cliffs, and serving as a receptacle for the inferior contraband trader, or those of even a more humble description.

A light, however, invited him into a place than which nothing could be more dreary and desolate, and the group he found around a fire in a miserable little room black with smoke, and filled with the fumes of tobacco and gin, did not contribute to give him a more favourable idea of this receptacle: but he had lived near ten months among the Iroquois; and evil is only by comparison. He saw that his entrance very much disturbed the people who were assembled here. Some took him for a Frenchman, and some for an Exciseman; two beings extremely obnoxious, it seems, to some or other of the party.

All

All agreed that he was a spy, and heartily wished him away.

Orlando now spoke to the landlady, and begged of her to give him something to eat; for he had fared very ill on board the fishing-boat. To this, and to his request that he might be allowed to dry his clothes by her fire, she answered in a way which convinced Orlando she doubted his power of paying for the accommodation he desired. To remove an objection so natural, and so incontrovertible, he put his hand into his pocket, and produced two pieces, which the hostess, not a novice in the value of French money, knew was hardly equal in amount to an English shilling. This (and Orlando had actually forgotten that it was all he possessed) was, however moderate, enough to pay for the coarse repast he expected: but the woman seemed more discontent than before, and the people surveyed him with eyes more severely scrutinizing; being convinced he was a French spy, or some person whose appearance

appearance there boded them no good : and these their suspicions, now that they found he was poor, they very openly professed ; and the landlady, telling him “ she never took no French money, nor she—nor let folks bide in her house as she know’d nothing of, because as why ? it made her liable to lose her license,” desired him to walk out : a request with which, though the storm continued with some violence, Orlando found it necessary to comply ; and, fatigued as he was, determined to attempt finding his way through the darkness and the tempest to Shoreham, where he thought there must be some person who would believe his story, and assist him for so short a journey as he had to perform.

In this resolution he set out to go back the way he came ; but mortified that such brutish in hospitality as what he had just experienced could exist in British bosoms, and lamenting that there were Englishmen less humane than the rude savages of the wilds of America.

Cold,

Cold, hungry, wet, and fatigued, he pursued his walk : it was soon so extremely dark that he could not distinguish the cliff, on which he was walking, from the beach over which it hung. The rain, driven by violence, almost blinded him, and the roaring of the wind and sea deafened him. Hardly able to stand against the tempest, he frequently stopped, debating whether he had not better wait the return of morning before he attempted to proceed.

His impatience, however, to get to Rayland Hall, conquered every idea of present danger—and he went on, contending against the united opposition of darkness and storm. After a walk of above a mile, he was nearly overcome with fatigue and cold, when lights, which he thought he distinguished through the comfortless gloom, animated him to new exertions, and he went on.

His hope did not deceive him ; but, in the eagerness to pursue it, he forgot the precaution with which he had walked before,

and fell headlong from the top to the bottom of the cliff, which fortunately for him was not at this place above ten or twelve feet deep, and he reached the bottom, without breaking any of his limbs, at the expence of some contusions. Recovering immediately from the surprize, he found himself able to walk ; and kept along the cliff till he reached the town, which was not till between twelve and one.

It was then with some difficulty that he discovered a house of public entertainment ; and when he did, it was with more difficulty still he obtained admittance. At length, after telling his story, which the man who heard it did not seem to believe, he was suffered to enter the kitchen of an abode between an inn and an alehouse ; where some embers of fire were renewed, and where, though suspicion evidently appeared to be very unfavourable to him, the man who had let him in brought him some cold meat, beer and bread, none of it of a very promising appearance, but such as his hunger made
extremely

extremely welcome. This being appeased, he enquired if he might have a bed, as he could go no farther that night. There either was no bed, or the person to whom he spoke thought him a traveller whom it was unsafe to admit to one; for this man answered drily, that they made up no beds in that house; but that he might go into the stable, where there was plenty of clean straw. There seemed to be no alternative, as the man objected to his proposal of sitting by the fire all night. To the stable, therefore, the unhappy wanderer was led, and in his wet cloths threw himself down on the straw in one of the stalls; where, in despite of his uncomfortable situation, extreme fatigue gave him up to sleep.

The noise of men entering to take care of their horses awakened him at the early dawn of the morning; and awakened him to such a sense of pain, from the bruises he had received, and the damp clothes in which he had lain, that it was with some difficulty he was able to move
from

from his straw into the kitchen, where had been the night before. Two sailors were drinking there, who, having nothing else to do, began questioning the stranger. Orlando related in a few words his melancholy adventures, and saw that these honest fellows not only believed him, but pitied his distress, and wished to contribute to his relief. His sufferings were now so acute from the bruises received in his fall, that all his fortitude could not conceal them. One of his new friends went to get him "something comfortable," which in his opinion was a large glass of spirits; while the other assisted him in drying his clothes, which were still wet; and as during this operation Orlando surveyed himself in a little looking-glass stuck against the wall, he found, in the appearance he made, some excuse for the coldness of his reception the night before.

His face was covered with blood and dirt, for his nose had bled from the fall; an old hat, which his pirate-fishermen had given

given him in place of a very good one they took, had been torn at the same time, and seemed only half a hat; his great coat was gone, and his coat was French; his waistcoat being the only part of his dress that was the same as he brought from Quebec. He had no buckles in his shoes, for the fishermen had desired them; and his hair, which had not had time to grow long since his coiffure, was in the mode of the Iroquois, and now presented what is called a shock head. Having amended his appearance as much as he could, he enquired if he could have an horse? but he was told that none were let there, nor did they know of any to be had in the town. By this time several other men were assembled in the kitchen; and the same enquiry being renewed, one of them said, that he could let him have a horse for fifteen shillings: but then how was it to come back? and besides, he must be paid for it upon the spot. This Orlando at once confessed his inability to do, and the *reasonable*

able man who offered it made no farther attempt to accommodate him.

Orlando then determined to set out on foot. The very little money he had in his pocket was insufficient to pay for even such entertainment as he had had, and he proposed leaving the shirt he had in his pocket as a pledge for the rest, when the two honest seamen offered to discharge his reckoning between them, and even to lend him each a shilling to carry him homeward—an offer he without hesitation accepted; made a memorandum of their names, as he doubted not of having an immediate opportunity, not only of repaying them, but of returning their kindness fourfold; and then he set out on foot, notwithstanding the pain he suffered, taking leave of the honest tars with many acknowledgments, and giving them his address at Rayland Hall. He was told that a stage would pass along about eleven o'clock; which, if he did not miss it by getting out of the high-road, would carry him some part of the seventeen or eighteen miles

miles that was between him and the place where he wished to be. This route was farther about ; but he determined to pursue it, because he found himself unable to walk with his usual activity ; nor could any less forcible inducement than the excessive impatience he felt to be at the Hall, have supported him in such an undertaking, worn out as he was with the fatigue he had sustained, and his limbs almost dislocated by the injuries he had received the night before.

His progress was slow ; and when at length the stage, by which he had been promised a conveyance part of the way, overtook him, he found it carried only so small a part of his way that he had then seven miles to walk. He knew that by going over the downs, he could reach Rayland Hall by a nearer way than continuing along the turnpike high-road ; and therefore, quitting the vehicle, he again proceeded on foot.

So little was he able to walk as he used to do, that as the days were now short,
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it was almost dusk before he reached the top of an high chalky down—the same where, on his departure, he had taken a last look of the place that contained all that was dear to him—and he again beheld it, its antique grey towers rising among the fading woods ; he distinguished the turret ; and recollecting that so long a space had intervened since he left there the object so dear to his soul, and how many distressing circumstances might have occurred within that time to destroy all his happiness, he became breathless through excess of agitation, and was under the necessity of sitting down on the turf to recover himself.

Beyond the Hall, which was within a mile and a half of the foot of the hill, he distinguished the country round West Wolverton :—the house was concealed : but a wood, or rather shrubbery, on a rising ground behind it, and some part of the offices, were clearly discernible. With sensations of mingled dread and delight he surveyed the well known spot. “ Dear paternal house,” cried he, “ in what a situation
do

do I return to your asylum!—but of how little consequence is that if your beloved inhabitants are well!—Oh, my father! are you now thinking of your Orlando, unconscious that he is within a few miles of you? The son whom you perhaps regret as dead is returning—a beggar indeed but not dishonoured—to your arms, and to find in the bosom of his family ample consolation for all his misfortunes.”

When, in indulging these mixed sensations, Orlando had a little recovered his breath and his resolution, he descended the hill; and was soon, by crossing the nearest way the few fields that intervened, at one of those gates at Rayland park where there was no lodge. He found it locked; but there was a stile near it, and he was soon under those well-known shades where he had passed the pleasantest hours of his life. Every thing seemed just as it had been left about the park. With a heart almost throbbing through his bosom, he approached the house,

house, and wondered to see no servants round it; nor the dogs who were usually running out on the approach of strangers. All was mournfully silent; and most of the windows were shut. Certain of not being known, if he was unable to resist the temptation he felt, to try the door of the lower turret—It was locked and he proceeded round the house to the stable-yard. There was no person to be seen where formerly there had been four or five servants: there was no appearance of horses; no poultry pecking about; all was still as death, and the grass had grown up among the pavement. Orlando's heart sunk within him; yet he knew not what to fear! the approach of the evening lent new gloom to the desolate appearance of all that he beheld.

C H A P. II.

AN apprehension of the truth, vague as it was, was infinitely more terrible than any certainty. With trembling hands, and breathless fear, Orlando now attempted to open the great door of the passage that led to the kitchen and servants' hall ; but this too was locked. He called aloud : his voice echoed round the old buildings that surrounded the court where he now stood ; but no answer was returned. After waiting and repeating again and again the names of the servants who lived with Mrs. Rayland when he went away, he rapped at the doors, and then at the windows : the lower windows on this side of the house, having strong iron bars, were not shut within. He looked through them into the servants' hall, and
the

the passage leading to it ; all was apparently deserted and dark !

He could no longer doubt but that Mrs. Rayland was dead—But where was Monimia ? what was become of all her domestics ? to whom did the mansion now belong, that it was thus forsaken ? New horrors beset him at every step ; but now, in a desperate determination to know the worst, or rather to indulge the mournful propensity he had to traverse these dreary rooms, and to visit the turret, he went round to the other part of the house. He tried the chapel-door, which had so often befriended him in happier days ; he found it broken, and off the hinges :—he entered the chapel, which appeared more ruinous and neglected than it used to be ; he would have enquired if the remains of his benefactress slumbered in the vault beneath it, but no trace remained that could inform him :—he approached the door that led from the chapel to his former apartment, but that was strongly fastened on the inside.

He then, while the only sound he heard

was that of the owls from the neighbouring woods, or the night jar as it flitted before him near the house, again traversed the park around it, and went to the opposite side, or principal front in the middle of which was the door of the great hall;—that too was fastened; but over it was the achievement of Mrs. Rayland, the family-arms in a lozenge:—Mrs. Rayland then was undoubtedly no more.

Whither could the weary, the wretched Orlando go for information? and how sad the information he must ask! for it was but too certain that, if Mr. Somerive, or any part of his family, had possessed the Hall, it could not have been thus desolate.

Orlando meditated a moment; if he could be said to meditate, whose heart felt petrified by the shock. He recollected, that the old and long-deserted summer-parlour near the library had a glass-door which opened into the park, and which was formerly left unlocked. He tried it: it was fastened; but it was yet light enough for him to distinguish that the key was in
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in it, within. He broke a pane of the glass without hesitation, and, putting his hand through, unlocked the door, and entered this parlour.

Melancholy were the observations he made, as, by the little light he had, he traversed this room. The wainscot had fallen down, and the boards were rotted away: the study, of which the door was open, had only half its books left; and the tapestry hung in fragments from the walls. Orlando could not bear the cold chill that struck on his heart. A low hollow gust of wind rushed through the deserted rooms: it seemed loaded with the groans of all he had ever loved, or revered—Yet he proceeded along the passage, which was quite dark—and, hardly knowing to what purpose, went through the great hall, and up the principal stair case—He entered the long north gallery, where, in the April days of their juvenile affection, he had nearly betrayed his innocent partiality for Monimia, by throwing the cricket-ball against the window.—Hideous spectres seemed to

beckon to him from the other end of it, and to menace him from the walls; though he knew that they were the portraits of his family in their black doublets, their armour, or their flowing night-gowns:—he stopped, however, in terror he was ashamed of feeling, and, listening a moment, thought he heard a door shut in some distant part of the house—Were there then inhabitants? or was it only the wind which flung to one of the doors he had left open?—He listened again; but all was still, and he began to consider what he should do next.—Fatigued and worn out as he was, and almost incapable of going farther, he felt a momentary inclination to take possession of a bed. He opened the door of one of the bed-chambers: the old high testered green silk bed looked like a mausoleum—it seemed black, and Orlando could have fancied that the corpse of Mrs. Rayland lay on it: the whole room appeared so damp that he resigned his half-formed project, and returned into the gallery with an intention of going out of the house, and repairing to
some

some of the neighbouring cottages, when he heard again a door shut towards the kitchen, and thought he distinguished a human voice.

He then went down a back stair-case across the apartment where Mrs. Rayland generally sat, and shuddering, as he now almost felt his way, he walked towards the kitchen. This was a room quite in the old-fashioned English style; and such as gave an immediate conviction, by the size of every utensil, of old English hospitality. It was such as Pope describes in his letter to the Duke of Buckingham, where the peasantry suppose the infernal spirits hold their sabbath; but upon a still larger scale.—As Orlando came near the door, he was convinced that he heard the murmuring sound of some person speaking as if in discontent. The door was not shut close; he pushed it gently open, and saw a female figure blowing the fire: he advanced towards her, and remarked, by the flashing light of the flame which rose as she blew, that she was bent double with age, and in coarse dress of the

lowest peasantry.—Instead of turning or speaking to him, she continued to mutter and mumble to herself, of which Orlando could distinguish no more than, “Why a plague did you not come sooner? about no good, I warrant ye . . . at this time o’night! and stalking about instead of helping . . .” Orlando now appeared before her, and spoke to her, enquiring for Mrs. Rayland; when the beldam, suddenly looking up, let fall the bellows, and, uttering a shriek or rather yell, hobbled towards the nearest door, crying out, “Thieves! murder! thieves!”

Orlando, following, attempted to pacify her: he assured her he was no thief, but the son of Mr. Somerive, the nearest relation of the late owner of that house, who was lately come from abroad, and did not know but what she had still owned it.—His voice seemed to have some effect in appeasing the fears of the old woman; but upon surveying him, they again returned—“You ’squire Somerive’s son!” exclaimed she—“Will you persuade me of that? Didn’t I know
’em

'em both?—Oh Lord! oh Lord! I shall be murder'd, that's for certain, and our Ralph's not come back—Oh! what shall I do?—what shall I do?" It was in vain Orlando renewed his protestations that he meant her no harm; she continued to insist on his leaving the house, and he remained resolutely bent not to go till he had obtained some information as to whom it now belonged. The contest lasted some minutes, when at last an halloo was heard without, and the woman exclaimed, "Oh! thank the good Lord, there's our Ralph." She went out to the passage, opened the door, and a stout surly-looking clown followed her into the kitchen, to whom she had related that a strange man had got into the house, had been walking all about it, and now would not go out—"I thoft, Lord help me! it was you; and there sat I blowing the fire, and wondering what a dickins you could be prancing about up stairs for."

The sturdy peasant surveyed his new visitor with evident marks of displeasure,

while Orlando told him who he was, and desired to know to whom Rayland Hall now belonged.

“ I don’t believe ’tis any business of yours,” replied the churl, “ and I’m sure you have nothing to do here ; for, let it belong to who ’twill—’tis no place for travellers and wagabonds—Come, master, troop ! mother and I we be put in this here Hall to look after it, and we can’t not answer it to our employers to let in no strangers nor wayfaring people.”

“ I only ask,” said Orlando, “ who *are* your employers ? surely you can have no objection to tell me that.”—“ Why, master archdeacon Hollybourn is *my* employer, then, if you must know ; and this house and premises belongs now to our bishop and dean ; and the archdeacon Hollybourn——”

“ Good God ! and how long has Mrs. Rayland been dead ?”

“ How long ? Why eight months or there away—But, come, master, I’ve answered your question civilly, though I don’t
know

know no right you have got to ask it, and now I desire you to walk out; and I hope there's no more on you about the premises; for, if there is, I must carry you before the Justice—and so, look'e, I've got a gun here" (and he reached one down from over the chimney) "that will do more sarvis in case of need besides hitting a rook."

Orlando, unarmed and defenceless as he was, and finding no success in his attempts to gain credit, was now compelled to leave this once hospitable mansion, where he had formerly been encouraged to dream 'of passing in it the noon of his life with his beloved Monimia—after whom, or her aunt Lennard, he had enquired fruitlessly. With despair in his heart he left the house (not however for the last time, though it was now the property of the good bishop and his dean and chapter), being determined to return the next day, for the mournful delight of surveying the apartment of Monimia, where he almost wished to expire. Yet he had hardly given way a moment to this unmanly despondence,

than he was ashamed of it : his father and his family were yet ready to receive him, and he quickened his pace through the gloom ; for it was now quite dark, and a strong south-west wind brought on a heavy driving rain.

How very mournful were the reflections of Orlando as he followed the well-known foot-path to West-Wolverton !—How different was his situation from that he fondly thought to have been in when he last took a reluctant leave, in this very path, of his Monimia !—Accustomed to associate poetry with all his ideas, his present condition, opposed to that which his sanguine imagination had flattered him with, brought to his mind that sublime ode, “ the Bard ” of Gray,

“ Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows ;
“ While proudly riding o’er the azure realm,
“ In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,
“ Youth on the prow, and pleasure at the helm ;
“ Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind’s sway,
“ That, hush’d in grim repose, expects his evening
“ prey.”

In such mournful meditations, and by dint of habit, or rather of his perfect recollection

lection of every shrub and tree about the place, so that he could have found his way even had it been darker than it was, Orlando reached the upper plantation, and descended on the other side, the almost perpendicular path that led down over the pond head. The roar of the water, which murmured hollow in the blasts of wind, and the fullen noise of the mill, well-known sounds which Orlando had so often listened to, brought back, in all their force, the recollection of the evening walks he used to have from Wolverton to the Hall to visit his Monimia. He went over the foot-bridge that arched the cascade now swollen with the rain, and entered the old fir-grove, where he fancied, in some former fits of despondence, that he heard, in every hollow wind, "Orlando will revisit this place no more!" Yet he did revisit it; but how? How fallen from all those dreams of happiness that had so often flattered him, and, in contradiction to this gloomy impression of his pensive moments,
had

had said—"Orlando will be the master of these scenes!"

Yet, if he found his father living and rejoiced at his return—if he once more felt the maternal tear of his beloved mother wet his cheek—if his sisters were well—if news had been received of Isabella—and if Selina, as he fondly hoped, could give him certain intelligence where he might fly to Monimia, all would be well; and, though he should regret his kind benefactress, regret the severe disappointment to his family, there was yet happiness, much happiness, to be hoped for.

It was so perfectly dark within the wood, that Orlando, not being able with all his knowledge of the place to find his path, went out to the edge of it, and continued his way along the pond side. He saw a light glimmering at a distance upon the water, which he perceived was reflected from the mill. The storm becoming more violent, he determined to go thither. The miller was one of Mrs. Rayland's tenants, who had not long before Orlando's departure

ture

ture for America granted him a very great favour in regard to the renewal of his lease, in consequence of Orlando's intercession. From this man, therefore, he doubted not of an hospitable reception, and the information relative to Mrs. Rayland which at the Hall he had been denied.

He soon arrived ; and, with a short stick he carried with him, rapped loudly at the door. A woman soon after looked out of the window from whence the light had proceeded, and enquired in apparent alarm, " Who is there ? "

Orlando answered, " Is it Mrs. Whitly who speaks ? "

" Mrs. Whitly, friend ! " replied the female voice : " Lord ! I cannot think what you want here at this time o'night ; why, master's a-bed, and the men folk too—I'm sure I wish you'd go about your business. "

" My business, " said Orlando, " is with Mr. Whitly—Tell him it is Orlando Somerive, his old friend. "

The woman then retired from the window

dow as if to speak to somebody, and, presently returning, cried, "Master says how he knows no such person—Young 'squire Orlando is dead a long while ago in parts beyond sea; and you must be a impostor—for 'tis well known the young man's not alive, and all his family were in mourning for un before they went out of this country."

The woman would then have shut the window; but Orlando, rendered half frantic by her last expression, conjured her with so much vehemence to hear him, that she delayed it a moment.—He implored her to tell him what she meant by saying that the Somerive family had left the country.—"Why, 'tis plain," answered she, "that you don't belong to none of them—for, if you did, you'd know that the old 'squire have been dead ever so long—a matter of two or three months before old Madam at the Hall; and that the young one, he as was always so wild like, have sold the house and farms and all to the
great

great 'squire at the castle, and that the rest on 'em have left the country."

Orlando could hear no more—his fortitude and his senses forsook him together—and weakness, from fatigue and want of food, disabled him from resisting any longer these repeated and overwhelming strokes of affliction—He staggered a few paces, and fell against the door of the house.

The woman, who perceived him by the light of the candle from the casement, began to think he must be, in some way or other, interested for the Somerive family, since he was thus affected; and, communicating his situation to her husband, who was in bed in the room from the window of which she had spoken, the miller, not without some grumbling and swearing, got up, and, looking out, saw Orlando lying on the ground, and apparently insensible. He then feared that he might "get into trouble," to use the expression of the country, if a man was found dead at his door, without his having assisted him; and calculating, rather than yielding to the impulse

pulse of humanity, he ordered his wife to go call up one of the men, and go down with him to see what was the matter with the fellow; and, if he was only drunk, or sick, to give him a dram, and to haul him away to a hovel full of straw in the yard—all which he thought less trouble than might be given him by the Coroner's Inquest, if the man should be found dead at his door in the morning.

His wife obeyed—and, taking a servant man with her, who had lived many years at the mill, they opened the door.—Orlando was insensible, and the man pronounced him dead;—but had not half a second held the candle to his face, before he exclaimed with a great oath, that it was either Orlando Somerive, or his ghost! That it was not his ghost, but himself, though sadly changed both in countenance and appearance, the miller's man was convinced, when Orlando, awakened from his trance by being moved, opened his eyes, while with a deep sigh, and wildly staring about him, he wrung the man's hand, and
conjured

conjured him, in incoherent terms, to tell him if it was true that his father was dead, and all his family dispersed—or if it were only a hideous dream.

The old man, who had known him from his infancy, was moved by the melancholy situation in which he saw him; and, helping him into the house, put him into a chair, and made him swallow some coarse kind of spirits—Orlando submitting to receive his assistance, but still passionately imploring him to say if what he fancied he had heard was real, while the man with tears in his eyes continued silent. By this time, however, the miller himself, Mr. Whitly, having been assured by his wife of Orlando's identity, came down; and Orlando renewing to him his eager adjurations, he began a long consolatory discourse, in which he attempted to prove that, as every body must die, none should be immeasurably grieved when an event so common happened to their friends.

Orlando with glazed eyes and contracted brows appeared to listen to his discourse; but,

but, in fact, heard not a word of it beyond those that confirmed his misfortune. With wildness in his voice and manner, he now desired to go to the house that was his father's, to go to the parish-church where he was buried. He demanded eagerly where his mother was? where were his sisters? His host answered, that they had been gone a long time to London; and that as to talking of going to West Wolverton house or such-like, or for to go for to think of going into the church at such a time, why it was quite out of reason; but he advised him to go to bed where he was for that night, saying very coldly (which coldness Orlando did not however remark), that he was welcome to a spare bed they had for one night or so; and the old servant plying him with spirits as liberally as his master did with advice, and believing his remedy the most efficacious of the two, fatigue and weakness soon overcome by the power of this application, he suffered himself, almost in a state of insensibility, to be led to a room where was a bed,

on

on which, without taking off his clothes, he threw himself, and forgot a little while all his sorrows.

Alas ! they recurred in the morning with severer poignancy—He did not, on his first recovering his senses, recollect where he was, and stared wildly around him ; but too soon the sad remembrance of his irreparable calamities rushed upon him, and he had need of all his reason and all his fortitude to enable him to bear this terrible conviction like a man. He went down stairs, determined to visit West Wolverton and the church, and then to set out for London ; but he had only eighteen-pence in his pocket, the remainder of what the sailors had lent him at Shoreham, and his clothes were such as would prevent him from obtaining credit on the road. He hoped that at the neighbouring town he might, when he was known, obtain credit for such an equipment as would prevent his terrifying his family by his appearance ; and, perhaps, a small supply of money from Mr. Whitly, to whom, as soon as he

he saw him, he opened without hesitation the reduced state of his finances, and desired he would lend him a guinea or two to bear his expences to London. This man, who was grown very rich by the excellent bargain he held under Mrs. Rayland, and by being a great proficient in the secrets of his trade, had, like many other rich men, an invincible aversion to the poor, or to any who might be accidentally reduced to the necessity of borrowing; and to Orlando, coming under both these descriptions, he gradually became more and more reserved as his present situation was explained; and when he ended by desiring a temporary assistance, the miller, with a sagacious look, replied, that he was very sorry, to be sure, that things were as they were—"For my part," said he, "I have a family of my own; nevertheless, I'm sure I would do a kind thing by a neighbour's son as soon as another—But the thing is this—Here's a will, d'ye see, of old Madam's, dated a good many years ago, which gives all her landed property to

to the bishop of this here diocese, his dean and chapter for purposes therein mentioned, and then legacies"—Orlando would here have interrupted him with questions; but the affluent Miller, opining, like most other affluent men, that a borrower ought to have no sentiments of his own, waved his hand to silence him, and continued—"Well, well, but hear me out, and then I'll hear you—I say, that being the case, why the will is disputed; because as why? Your brother Phill, d'ye see, says he's heir at law, and so there's a Chancery law-suit about it—But we knows that a will's a will, and the longest purse will carry the day.—Well! the upshot of all is, that heir at law, or not heir at law, your brother, if he can carry on the suit, which folks be pretty dubious about, will never get no part of it."—"And, therefore," said Orlando sharply, "you will not lend me what I asked?—It is well—I wish you a good morning, and desire to pay for what I have had at your house, which I think cannot exceed a shilling in value." He then threw down
a shilling

a shilling on the table; and, without attending to Mr. Whitly any farther, left his house; and hardly knowing what he did, he went towards the house of his father. The ingratitude and selfishness of the man whom he had left gave him an additional pang; but it was only momentary, for grief of a more corrosive nature overwhelmed him; and when he arrived at the door of the house he proposed entering, his knees trembled under him; his looks were wild and haggard; and he was incapable of considering that the house was now in possession of strangers. He passed into the yard, which was surrounded by the offices; but all was changed; and he stood in the stupefaction of despair, without having any precise idea of what he intended to do, till he was roused from this torpid state by a maid-servant, who, hearing the dogs bark, came out and enquired what he did there.

Orlando answered incoherently that it was his father's house—that he came to look for his father.—The girl in terror left him;
and

and, believing him either a madman or a robber, but rather the former, ran in to her mistress, and, carefully locking the kitchen door, informed her that there was a crazy man in the yard. This young woman, who was the mistress of one of Stockton's friends to whom he had lent the house, wanted neither understanding nor humanity, however deficient she might be in other virtues; and knowing the natural propensity of the vulgar to terrify themselves and others, she called to a man, who was at work in the garden, to follow her, and then went to speak herself to the person whom her servant had represented as a lunatic.

She found the unhappy young man seated on a pile of wood near the door, his arms resting on his knees and concealing his face. The noise of her opening the door and approaching him seemed not to rouse him from his mournful reverie: but she spoke gently to him; and Orlando, looking up, shewed a countenance on which extreme agony of mind was strongly

painted, but which was still handsome and interesting, and appeared to belong to one who had seen better days:—"Is there any thing, Sir, you wish to know? Can I be of any service to you?" These few words, spoken in a pleasing female voice, had an immediate effect in softening the heart of Orlando, petrified by affliction. He burst into tears; and rising said—"Ah, Madam! forgive my intrusion, forgive me, who am a stranger where I had once a home. This house was my father's!—Here I left him when seventeen months since I went to America—Here I left my father, my mother, and three sisters—and all, all are gone!" He lost his voice, and leaned against a tree near him.

The young person, extremely affected by the genuine expression of grief, and convinced that he was no madman, now invited him into the parlour; and Orlando, unknowing what he did, followed her.

Every object that he saw was a dagger to his heart. As Philip had sold to Stockton every thing as it remained at his father's death,

death, a great part of the furniture was the same. Startled at every step he took by the recollection of some well-known object, he entered the parlour more dead than alive, and pale as a corpse, and with quivering lips, he attempted to speak, but could not. The young woman saw his agitation, and pouring him out a large glass of wine, besought him to drink it, and to compose himself, again repeating her offers of kindness. He put back the glass—"I thank you, Madam, but I cannot drink—I cannot swallow.—That picture," added he, fixing his eyes wildly on a landscape over the chimney—"that picture belonged to my father; he used, I remember, to value it highly—I beg your pardon, Madam—I know not what I proposed by coming hither, unless it were to procure a direction to my mother and sisters. Where my father is I know too well, though I believe," continued he, putting his hand to his forehead, "that I said when I first came into the court-yard, that I looked for him—Can you, Madam, tell

me where I can find the part of my family that does survive?"

The young woman, with increasing interest, told him that she had been there only a few weeks, and was quite a stranger in the country; but that, if he could recollect any person thereabouts likely to be better informed, she would send a servant to fetch them, or with any message he might direct.

C H A P. II.

AFTER a pause, sufficiently expressive of the difficulty with which he thought, Orlando said, that there was at the neighbouring town an Attorney with whom his father had been long connected; and who at his setting out in life had received many favours from the family of Somerive.—To him he wished to send—"or rather I will go to him, Madam—for why should I be longer troublesome to you?" He then got up; but the young person with great gentleness and good nature, said, "You are not able, I am sure, to walk so far—if you are not too much wounded by the recollections that surround you here to stay, I beg you to take some refreshment, while I send a servant to the gentleman; he shall go on horseback, and will soon be back."

As Orlando did indeed doubt whether he was able to walk so far as the town, and an idea struck him, that while the messenger was gone, he could visit the family vault, in the church of West Wolverton, where the remains of his father were deposited, he accepted, after a slight apology, of the obliging offer of his hostess; who bringing him pen and ink, he wrote with an uncertain and trembling hand—"Mr. O. Somerive being returned from America, and quite ignorant till his arrival here of the many alterations in this neighbourhood, will esteem it a favour if Mr. Brock will oblige him with his company for half an hour—at the house formerly his father's at West Wolverton.—"

Having sent away this note, and being prevailed upon to take the refreshment he had at first refused; he told his new acquaintance, that he had a wish to visit two or three places in the adjoining village, and would, with her permission, return to the house in time to meet Mr. Brock, if he
were

were so obliging as to attend upon his message.

The servant being sent away, Orlando set forth to visit the tomb of his father.—He knew well the spot: it was in the chancel of the church, and the entrance was marked by a stone, with the arms of Somerive and Rayland quartered upon it. The sexton, who at first appeared to have lost all recollection of him, gave him the keys as soon as he knew him—and the unhappy wanderer, throwing himself on the ground, gave way to that grief which he had hitherto checked.—Now it was, however, that he felt the reward of his dutiful conduct; for he was conscious that, except in the single instance in regard to his sister Isabella, he had never wilfully disobeyed his father; and he felt too, that if by taking Monimia with him, or by any other act of disobedient ingratitude, he had felt himself accessory to that affliction which he too well understood had hastened the death of his parent, that sorrow, which was now unmixed with self-reproach, would

then have driven him to distraction.—As he kissed and took a last leave of this deposit of the ashes of his family, he recollected, that his affection to the lost friend whom he deplored would be shewn rather by his tenderness and duty towards his mother and sisters, than by giving himself up to useless despair.—Roused by this reflection to more manly thoughts, he arose from the ground, and his heart having been relieved by the indulgence he had thus given to his grief, he quitted the church with a deep sigh, and determined to walk as quickly as he could round Rayland park—having an unconquerable desire to visit the turret of Monimia, which he thought he might do in the day time, by letting himself in through the same door where he had entered before; and as he knew every part of the house, finding his way thither without alarming the vigilance of the old woman who kept the house. In this intention he traversed the outside of the park paling very hastily, when the sight of the north lodge and the
cottage

cottage near it, brought to his mind the circumstances of Monimia's letter; who there described her meeting with Sir John Belgrave; and he thought the woman of the cottage might give him some particulars, which he hitherto had not been able to learn.—Entering therefore, and making her, not without much difficulty, recollect him; he was forced to bear all her wondering, and all her enquiries, before he could prevail upon her to give him the following particulars:

“ Lord, Sir! why now I tell you as well as I can all how these bad things have come to pass.—In the first place, after you was gone, somehow there seemed no content at the Hall—I heard say, that Madam began to droop as 'twere a fortnight or two afterwards; and was never pleas'd with nothing that could be done for her—And there came out a story about Patten-son—the rights of the matter, my husband says, never were cleared up; but however, to the surprise of every body, my Lady she believed some story about him; and

though 'twas reported he tried to turn the tables upon Madam Lennard, sure enough he was dismissed from the Hall for good; but for certain not like a disgraced servant; for Madam gave him a power of good things, and his farm as he took was stocked from the Hall; and sure enough he had feather'd his nest well one way or other; for he died worth a mort of money."—

"Pattenfon is dead then?" said Orlando.

"Lord help you, yes!" answered the good woman—"Why he died of the gout in his stomach just afore my Lady—But if you'll have a little patience I'll go on with my story. So Pattenfon went away; and after that Madam Lennard seem'd somehow to govern my Lady more than ever; yet folks said, that it was not so much she, as them there Rokers, uncle and nephew, that was put in by her as stewards; and to be sure there was for a long time strange talk—and they said, that Madam Lennard was jealous of young Roker, he as she afterwards married—and so sent away her

her niece's daughter, that sweet pretty young creature that you remember at the Hall."

"And what is become of her?" cried Orlando eagerly—"Whither was she sent?"

"Why that nobody knew nothing about at the time, as every body saw. Madam Lennard was shy of speaking of her; but folks *have* said since, that she was gone up to London, with some Lord or Baron Knight; for my part, as I say to my husband, I don't care to give credit to such scandalous stories upon mere hearsay.—However, to go on with my story:—By then Madam Lennard had sent this poor young thing away, every body thought how the affair would go—at least folks about the house says, they saw it plain enough—So then, your poor father, who had been ailing a long time, he was taken sick, and when all the doctors had given him over, he sent to beg Mrs. Rayland would come to him; and though Mrs. Lennard she did, as I've heard say, all she could to hinder my Lady's going,

she went; and though nobody knows what passed, because nobody was in the room but Madam Somerive, your good mother, yet every body said, that the 'squire got a power better after he had seen the old lady, and said his mind was easy; and then every body thought he would recover—and it was given out, that the 'squire had seen my Lady's will, or, however, that she had told him the contents, and that she had made you her heir."

"Me?" said Orlando—"alas! no!"—

"Well, but that was the notion of the country, and I am sure, there's nobody in all this here part of our county but what heartily wishes it had been true—Well, and so 'Squire Somerive he went on for a little while, getting better and better; till something fresh broke out, about your brother, Mr. Philip; and so upon that, he grew worse again, and died in a few days. Oh! what sad affliction all the family was in! but Madam, at the Hall, was more kind to them than she used to be; for she sent to fetch them up to the
Hall

Hall the day of the funeral, and kept them there three or four days, till the young 'squire hearing how his father was dead, came down—then your mother and sisters went back to their house : but alack-a-day!—he soon began to make sad alterations, and was driving a bargain for the sale of the estate to 'Squire Stockton, almost, folks said, before his father was cold in his grave.”—

Orlando clasped his hands eagerly together, and drew a convulsed sigh ; but he was unable to interrupt the narration, and the woman went on—

“ So, Sir, just about that time Madam Rayland she was taken ill—yet it did not seem, somehow, that there was much the matter with her ; but she drooped, and drooped, and pined, and pined—and people said, as I saw her sometimes, that is, the footmen who waited before she took to her bed, and the maids as sat up with her, especially Rachel, that she looked so after you, and used to send every day to your mother to know if she had heard of you ; and sent
for

for her to come to her, and gave her letters for you to desire you would come back ; for she mistrusted, somehow, that Lennard had never sent the letters she wrote to you before ; and all the people said, that Lennard, with all her art, had not been able to keep matters so snug, about her lover, but that her lady had an inkling of the matter—And they said, too, that Madam was not half so fond of her as she used to be ; but that she had been used to her so long, and had been so in the custom of letting her do what she would, that now, as she was so old, and sick, and feeble, and out of spirits, she had not resolution to speak her mind.—Well, Madam died, and then—Good Lord, what a work there was at Hall !”—

“ How do you mean ? ” said Orlando.

“ Why, your brother Philip sent to take possession of every thing as heir at law ; but old Roker and his nephew would not let him or his people come in ; as they said they had a will of Madam Rayland’s, and he must come and hear it read.

—Yours

—Your mother tried, as I heard say, to pacify your brother; because she knew, or however believed for certain, that your honour's self was the heir—So with that, upon a day appointed by these Rokers, who had possession of the house, your poor mother, and your two sisters, and the young 'squire your brother, they went to the Hall, and there, as I heard say, was the two Rokers and Madam Lennard, and the servants, all assembled; and so young Roker took upon him to read the will, though your brother took a young lawyer with him from London, one Counsellor Staply; and there the will was read; and instead of leaving you the heir, it was a will made ever so long before, when Madam Rayland was out of humour with Mr. Somerive: and so there, it seems, that she gave five thousand pounds to Pattenfon if he outlived her, but he was dead, and there was an end of that; and two thousand to the old coachman, who is as rich as a jew already—and a matter of ten thousand to Mrs. Lennard—And not
only

only so, but all her clothes—and ever so many pieces of fine plate ; and a diamond ring—and the Hampshire farms, which ben't worth so little as four hundred pounds a year—And then, all Madam's fine laces, and fatten gowns, and her sister's too, for none of them had ever been given away—They say that 'twas not so little as six or seven hundred pounds worth of clothes and laces ; and all the fine household linen—Such beautiful great damask tablecloths and napkins—and such great chests full of sheets ; besides a mort of things that I cannot remember not I—But the great house, and all the noble estates in this county, she gave to the Bishop, as I suppose you know, and to the Dean and Chapter, for charitable uses, and to build a sort of alms-house—But it's very well known that the greatest part of it will go into their own pockets—and I cannot think, for my share, and my husband he says the same, why a-deuce Madam gave her money to them there parsons, when they always take care to have enough
out

out of the farmers and poor men, let who will go without."

A deep sigh was again extorted from Orlando, and the good gossip remarking it, said: "Ah, Sir, to be sure you may well sigh!—Such a fine estate! and so justly your right by all accounts; and then after promising your father so faithfully too!—Poor Madam Somerive, your good mother, was in very sad trouble—Philip he raved and ranted, and made a sad to-do, but there was no remedy; them two Rokers had got possession of the house, and after the funeral, I reckon, they thought to have kept it, as stewards to the new owners; but whip! the parsons come upon them, and packed them off; and they've put in old Betty Grant and her son just to look after it, and open the windows—But, Lord! I'm sure the place looks so mollencholy as makes my very heart ach to pass it.—But, however, to go on with my story of all the troubles of your poor dear mother—After this, a week or so, news came by a negur man

as

as went with that young captain as your sister Belle ran away with, that he and miss were drowned or cast away, at some place beyond sea—I can't remember rightly the name of it; but, however, that they were lost, and that you were killed in battle by the wild Ingines; this man told my husband he saw you dead with his own eyes, and your skull cleft with one of their swords"—

"And where," said Orlando, "is this man now?"—"Why, Madam took him," replied the woman, "and when the family left the country, he went up to London with them"—

"And how long have they been gone?"

"Nigh two months, as well as I can remember; poor dear ladies! I'm sure we poor folks miss them sadly, and so we do the Hall."——

"And my brother," enquired Orlando, "what is become of my brother?"

"Oh, as for that," answered the woman, "nobody knows; and I must say this, 'squire, that if you'd a been like him, nobody would
have

have been so sorry as they were, that Madam gave her money elsewhere; for would you think it?—at the very time he came down here to take possession of his house, after the poor gentleman his father's death, and when all the family was in such affliction—what did he do, but bring down that nasty flaunting hussy Bet Richards, that was took from the parish work-house to be housemaid at the Hall—whom he have kept in London all's one as a lady, and dressed her up better than any of his sisters—and she's as impudent and proud!—I'd have all such wicked toads sent to beat hemp—and every body has said 'twas a thousand pities she was not in her old place the work-house again, instead of prancing about as she did, to break poor dear Madam Somerive's heart; who, though she seemed to bear it all with patience, and to take no notice, was quite as I may say, sunk and weighed down with one sorrow's falling so fast upon another—and, at last, when she found the house and estate

estate and all the goods were sold, and that she and her daughters must leave it, and then, just afterwards, when the negur's news came, she seemed to be quite, quite gone!—and I heard say, her health was in a bad state after she got to London.”

Dreadfully affected by this account of his mother, all of whose sufferings he felt, however coarse and simple the relation of them, Orlando now again enquired of his informer, if she knew where his mother and sisters lived in town?—She said, No; there was a neighbour's daughter gone up lately to London to live with them as a servant; whose friends knew the direction, and to them she would send if he would stay. Orlando thanked her—and then expressed some wonder that his mother, who had always disliked London, should fix there. To which the woman said, “Why, Sir, I've heard say, that the reason of that was, that Madam's brother, the London Merchant, insisted upon it; and another reason was, because she thought that if she was not always

at

at his elbow, your brother would go after his pleasures and that; and so neglect the great law-suit."

"What law-suit?"—said Orlando, who had forgotten at that moment the vague information he had received from the miller.

"Why you must know, Sir," replied the woman, "that when first my Lady died, there was a great talk about the country, that there was some black doings about the will; for from what she had said to your father, and from a great many other things she had said, and from her having Lawyers from London come down about three years and a half ago, when folks thought she made a new will in your favour; there were those, and in the house too, who didn't scruple to say, that the real will was made away with by them Rokers, and that an old will was proved—So your brother he was advised by counsellor Staply to go to law;—but he said if there was another will, it was in your favour, not in his; and he'd as lieve the
Parsons,

Parsons, or the Devil, had the estate as you.—However, when a little while after news came of your death, then he went to law directly; because, he said, if there was such a will, he was your heir-at-law, and the old woman's too:—and so he is suing the Rokers; that is, Mrs. Lennard and her husband; for you know the old soul took to herself a young husband at last."

Orlando expressing his surprise at this, enquired where they lived—"Oh!" answered she, "when they found they were bit as to continuing in the stewardship, and that Archdeacon Hollybourn had provided another for my Lord Bishop and the Parsons, and was to overlook the estate himself, Mr. and Mrs. Roker went away to live in Hampshire, upon the estate my Lady gave them there; and there, I understand, they live quite like great people, and are visited and noticed by all the quality; only Madam I hear is terribly jealous;—and they say her young husband is not over and above good-humoured to her,

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though

though he got such a great fortune by her."

The good woman seemed never weary of talking; but having at length exhausted all she could recollect, and promising to procure a direction from her neighbour, and send it down in a few minutes to West Wolverton, Orlando took his leave. And as, just as he left the cottage, the clock in it struck three, he was afraid of intruding upon the benevolence of his new friend, at the house once his father's, if he left her long with the lawyer whom he had sent for; and therefore, instead of going then to make his mournful visit to the turret, he returned to West Wolverton, where he found the man sent to the town had been some time returned, and had brought from his father's former friend, the attorney, a note to this purport—

"Mr Brock's compts: imagines some mistake—has not the honor to know any gentleman of the name of Somerive, except

except Philip S. Esq; late of West Wol-
verton—hopes to be excused, being par-
ticularly engaged.”

This note completed the distress of Or-
lando, who saw that he should now be taken
for an impostor where he was, and obtain
no credit where he expected it to carry
him to London, where he now most ear-
nestly wished to be, because there only
could he hope to see his family, or to have
any explanation of the hints so darkly given
by the labourer's wife—hints, which among
the complicated misfortunes which sur-
rounded him, gave him the most insup-
portable pain.—“Gone with some lord!”
Impossible—Yet the very idea was distrac-
tion. He was believed dead. He re-
gretted that he had not asked whether Mo-
nimia heard of his death, not at that mo-
ment recollecting that his informer's know-
ledge hardly went so far; and that, by her
account, Monimia was gone before the
death of Mrs. Rayland, and before the ar-
rival of the intelligence brought by Per-
seus

feus the negro: yet again he recollected, that if Selina and Monimia still corresponded, she must immediately have known it; and thus by all he loved in the world he was considered as dead.

To undeceive them as soon as he could was what appeared most necessary; but how to do that he knew not. He could not bear to beg of any of the neighbouring gentlemen—indeed he knew none of them but Stockton (who was the last man in the world he desired to meet), for all the rest were at a great distance, and the elder Somerive had never sought their acquaintance: some were too expensive for him, and others too ignorant to afford him any pleasure in their society. By the richest he was contemned as a petty gentleman; and by the rest envied as the future possessor of Rayland Hall—and therefore very little intercourse had ever passed between them and the family at West Wolverton. While Orlando, whom his hospitable acquaintance had the consideration to leave by himself, was medi-

tating on his wretched and forlorn situation, a young man was introduced into the room, in whom he immediately recollected a clerk to the lawyer to whom his unsuccessful note had been written; who, immediately acknowledging him, changed as he was, related, that Mr. Brock having shewn him the note, and declaimed against it as an imposition, it being, he said, perfectly well known that Orlando Somerive was dead—the young man thought he recollected his hand, there having been formerly some degree of intimacy between them; and unwilling to dispute the point with Brock, who was, he told him, Solicitor in the depending cause between the Bishop and the Somerive family, he had made some excuse of business, and came to see himself whether it was his old friend, or some one wishing to represent him.

All the difficulties which Orlando had to encounter as to going to London were now removed at once—This young man, Mr. Dawson, offered not only to supply him with money but clothes; and they agreed

to

to proceed together to the town in the dusk, as Orlando did not wish to be known, nor indeed to be seen, in his present condition. This being settled, Orlando would immediately have taken leave of his humane hostess; but she entreated both him and his friend to stay dinner, with a frankness and good humour which Dawson was less disposed than Orlando to resist. As soon as it was nearly dark she ordered him to be accommodated with a horse, and sent a servant with him to bring it back.

With a thousand grateful acknowledgments Orlando took his leave; and with an agonizing sigh left, as he believed for ever, the paternal house and the neighbourhood of the Hall, without having been able to indulge his melancholy by visiting the turret.

His friend, though he could give him very little information more than he had already received, and none about Monimia, yet soothed and consoled him; and, having equipped him with a coat, hat, and linen of his own, as they were nearly of a

size, he put five guineas into his hand; and, desiring to hear from him, saw him into the stage-coach, which, at six every morning, set out from the town where they were for London.

C H A P. IV.

THE variety of uneasy emotions which passed through the mind of Orlando, as he journeyed towards London, would be difficult to describe, since he himself could hardly discriminate them; but each, though not distinct, was acutely painful. In what a situation did he return to his family! in what a situation did he find it! How should he, while his mind was yet enfeebled from the cruel disappointments he had experienced on his arrival in England, be able to bear the tears of his mother, the sorrow of his two sisters? how console them for the loss they had sustained? how strengthen by his example their more tender minds, to endure what he feared the dissolute folly of his brother might yet bring upon them; while his own

heart recoiled from the idea of meeting that brother, and was bleeding with the dreadful wounds inflicted by the uncertainty of what was become of Monimia; which, had he not entertained some hopes of hearing of her from his sister Selina, would have driven him to distraction! Of his sister Isabella he thought too with great concern; and when the reflection, which alone brought some comfort to his mind, occurred to him, that he had resisted the temptation Warwick threw in his way, and had not, to gratify himself, plunged another dagger in the heart of his father—even this consolatory testimony of his conscience was embittered by the enquiry that conscience immediately made, whether he had not acted wrong in not discovering the design of Warwick, and had not sacrificed his real duty to a mistaken point of honour. As he approached London, the agitation of his mind became greater. As his mother believed him dead, his sudden appearance might have the most fatal effects—That even if he was put down at a coffee-house,
and

and sent a note to inform her of his arrival, the sight of his hand-writing might equally affect a mother and sisters, who had long lamented him as consigned to a grave on the banks of Hudson's River,

There was one expedient that occurred, which, though extremely disagreeable to him, he at length determined to adopt—which was, to go on his reaching London to Mr. Woodford's, and consult with him on the properest way of discovering to his family his unexpected arrival.

Though he was aware that he should have only insulting pity or coarse raillery to sustain from his uncle, he thought the dread of such transient and inconsequential evils, should yield to the important point of not injuring the health of a parent so beloved; and as soon as the stage in which he travelled reached Westminster Bridge, he got into an hackney coach and ordered it to be driven to the house of Mr. Woodford.

On his reaching this place, and enquiring for him, he was told by a maid that

opened the door, that Mr. Woodford's family had been removed some months from that house, and resided in King's Street, St. James's Square, at an house of which the maid gave him the number, and whither he immediately repaired.

It was easily found—two lamps at the door, and the appearance of the house, which had been lately refitted in a style of uncommon elegance, seemed to say to Orlando, that he would find his uncle in increasing affluence.

A very smart powdered footman opened the door, who, upon being asked if Mr. Woodford was at home, answered shortly, No; and surveying the hackney coach with contempt, seemed disposed to close the half-opened door, without attending to any farther enquiries.

But Orlando, putting his head out of the coach, called to the servant, and enquired at what time that evening he could see Mr. Woodford, with whom he had business that admitted of no delay.

“He can't be seen to-night,” said the
servant;

servant; "he is engaged for the evening."

"If you will tell me where then," replied Orlando, "I will go to him, for I must see him immediately."

The man, who seemed afraid of venturing out to the coach door, lest he should soil his shoes, or lose the powder from his hair, still held the door only partly open, and said very sullenly—"You must leave your business, and call again—my master will do no business with any body to night; he expects company to dinner; and I am sure he won't be disturbed."

Orlando now got out of the coach, and said to the servant, that as he was Mr. Woodford's nephew, he was sure he would see him. The man then, though with apparent reluctance, opened the door of a back parlour, and, while he stood at it himself, as if he was afraid Orlando would steal something, called to another footman to go and inform his master that his nephew desired to see him below.

At the same moment loud rapping was
E 5 heard

heard at the door, and the man, in visible distress, said, "I shall be blamed for letting any body in—here's the company come; I wish, Sir, you'd call any other time—there's my Lord and Sir Richard and Lady Wiggin, and Sir James and Lady Penguin—it's quite impossible, Sir, for my master to see you."

Orlando had not time to answer, before the other footman returned, and said very roughly, that his master desired the person, whoever he was, to walk out—for he must be an impostor, because he acknowledged no nephew.

Orlando, imagining that Mr. Woodford supposed him to be his brother, and therefore would not see him, had only to quit the house, and desist from his design of speaking to his uncle that evening; or to convince him that he had yet a nephew living, whom he had at least no reason to disclaim: he resolved on the latter, and putting back with his hand the servants who would have opposed his passage, he went up stairs. The door of the dining-
room

room was yet open, for the visitors had hardly yet settled themselves, and some were standing near it till Sir Richard and Lady Wiggin had paid their compliments. Orlando, notwithstanding the abusive and insolent efforts of the servants, who had followed him up stairs to stop him, entered the room, and going up to Mr. Woodford, who stared at him as a perfect stranger, made himself immediately known to him. Mr. Woodford expressed more surprise than pleasure. But he could not help acknowledging his nephew, whom he slightly named to his guests, and coldly asked him to sit down and stay dinner.

Orlando, not much flattered by his reception, answered, that as he had not seen his mother, he must hasten to her, and meant no farther to intrude upon Mr. Woodford, than to consult with him on the properest way of breaking to his mother, news the joy of which might overpower her.

“Oh!” cried Woodford, “if that be all, I fancy you may venture to take your

own way—I never heard that joy killed any body; and I don't imagine you have much good fortune to relate (added he, surveying him) to turn the brains of your family."

Lady Wiggin, a squat figure, most sumptuously dressed, now surveyed Orlando, as he stood talking to his uncle before the fire, and then whispered to a younger woman who sat next her, whom he had not till then observed, but in whom, under the disguise of the most preposterous extremity of the fashion, with a very high head, and cheeks of the last Parisian dye, he discovered his elder cousin, to whom he bowed; while she slightly bowing in return, bit the end of her fan, and screwing herself into an attitude which she seemed to have studied, replied with half shut eyes to the whisper of her titled neighbour.

Woodford seemed glad that Orlando declined dining with him, yet was unwilling to take the trouble of interfering in his first introduction to his mother. Predetermined not to be discouraged by the
unfeeling

unfeeling raillery, or repressed by the coldness of his uncle, he enquired again in a low voice, if he could be allowed to speak to him alone—"I have much to say to you, Sir," said he, "which it is not proper to discourse upon now. You may imagine I am very impatient to see my mother and my sisters—I will not detain you long—only let me for five minutes ask your attention below."

The great man, who was no longer a wine merchant in the Strand soliciting the custom of the great, but their pompous entertainer, who was enabled, by the advantages of a great contract obtained by the favour (and perhaps by yielding to the participation) of one of them, to vie in splendour with his patrons, seemed to be made very restless by this demand—"I'd go down into my study with you, with all my heart," said he, in the same low tone; "but my Lord and Sir James are not come, and my son not being here to receive them, I should be sorry . . . but however . . . you had better stay and dine perhaps, and then

then . . .” Another loud rap at the door relieved him from this embarrassment; it wanted but a quarter to seven, and my Lord was announced. In the bustle to receive so eminent a personage, with what Woodford thought politeness, but what appeared to Orlando the most cringing servility he had ever witnessed, his worthy uncle seemed totally to have forgotten him; and before the ceremony of this reception, and that of Sir James, who followed the peer as one of his satellites, was over, dinner was announced; and the company proceeded down stairs; while Orlando, finding that his uncle had as little taste for poor relations as if he had been born himself a great man, instead of having suddenly become so, by means which Orlando wondered at, rather than understood, took the opportunity of opening the street door himself, and returned to his hack, which was driven into the square, to make room for the splendid equipages which had since arrived at the door.

He stepped in; but when the coachman

asked him whither to drive, he knew not what to reply. He knew nobody: nor did he recollect one friend in this immense town, to whom he could in such an exigence apply.—The small house his mother had taken, was in Howland-Street; and he thought he had better drive to some coffee-house in the neighbourhood, where he might consider how he could first speak to Selina. As he proceeded to a coffee-house in Oxford Street, which the coachman named to him upon his enquiring for one, he could not help reflecting on the strange vicissitudes of fortune, and the strange way in which her gifts are divided. It was only a few months since he had an almost undoubted prospect of succeeding to the great estates of Mrs. Rayland; he was now not only deprived of all those hopes, but was literally a beggar—and going home, not to assist his ruined family, but to add to it another indigent member, and to weep with them all the mournful changes that had happened during his absence.

He

He had not yet determined how he should introduce himself to the dear dejected group, when he arrived at the coffee-house, where he discharged his coach, and called for a private room. He then, since no better expedient occurred to him, desired a pen, ink, and paper, and in an hand which he attempted to disguise (and he trembled so as to aid the deception) he wrote these few words to Selina—"Your brother Orlando is living, and in England—have the presence of mind not to betray this secret, which will I think give you great pleasure, to your mother too suddenly; and when he knows he can come without too much surprising your mother, he will be at your door."—He had hardly finished and directed this note, in which he tried to alter his hand only that the sight of it might not so suddenly strike his sister as to render his precaution useless, he recollected, that as Perseus the negro was now his mother's servant, he had better go himself to the door of the house; discover himself to that faithful

faithful fellow ; and contrive, by his means, to speak to Selina first.

This scheme appeared to him so much better than the first, that he determined to put it into immediate execution. However, he put the note he had written into his pocket, that if Perseus happened not to be at home, he might still proceed as he had at first intended.

With a beating heart he approached the door, and hesitated with apprehension before he could determine to knock at it. At length he gave a loud single rap, and Perseus appeared.—“ Do you know me, Perseus ?” said Orlando, in a low voice. “ Know you,” answered the negro, who spoke pretty good English, and without much of the negro accent—“ No ! how should I know you ?” “ Have you forgot,” said Orlando, “ the morning we passed together in the wood, on the banks of Hudson’s River ?” While he thus spoke, Perseus held the candle, which he had set down in the passage, to his face, and with a sudden exclamation letting it fall, he ran

as

as fast as he could back into the kitchen, declaring to the two maids, as trembling he threw himself into a chair, that he had seen a ghost.

The elder of these women, a stout peasant from the weald of Suffex, who had no notion of ghosts, huffed the affrighted negro for his folly, and said, "I wonder what you mean, Perseus—why sure you are not in your right wits? A ghost quotha! I hope you have not left the door open, with your ghosts?"

"I cannot tell," cried Perseus—"but you better see—I see master Orlando's ghost, and I'll go no more."

Orlando, foreseeing that from the poor fellow's terror, all the risk would be incurred which he had wished to avoid, now walked into the house, in the hope of preventing his mother and sisters from being alarmed by the folly of the servants; and when Hannah ascended to secure the door, which she had been strictly enjoined never to leave of an evening without a chain, she met Orlando on the top of the stairs. Struck with

with equal terror, though from a different cause, she now screamed and returned to the kitchen, where, as well as her fright would let her, she declaimed against the folly of Perseus, who being afraid of a ghost, had let in a man.

Orlando, provoked by the ridiculous fears of both, now went into the kitchen; and not without difficulty convinced the negro that he was alive; and the maid, that he had no intention to rob the house: but all the clamour that these mistakes had excited, could not be unheard in the room where Mrs. Somerive was sitting with her daughters; and the bell had rung violently several times, before the assurance of Orlando's identity had restored to Perseus courage enough to obey the summons.

Orlando entreated of him to go up, to account for the noise below as well as he could, and to beckon, or by some other means contrive to get his sister Selina out of the room. Perseus, trembling with his former apprehensions and his present joy, undertook to do this, and hastened up stairs.

stairs. At the door of the dining-room Selina stood, and asked him if any thing was the matter below ; and Mrs. Somerive eagerly repeated the question, saying—“ Perseus, is any thing wrong below ? who was at the door ? ”—He advanced to the table near which his mistress was sitting, and saying to Selina in an half whisper as he passed her—“ ’Tis your brother, miss, you go see him,” he answered to the questions Mrs. Somerive asked him—“ No, Ma’am—no bad matter—only that I thought, that I that Hannah . . . she say——” His confusion was the more evident, the more he attempted to conceal it ; nor did his dark skin conceal the emotion of his spirits ; while Selina, who believed it was her elder brother, and who felt only terror at his name, approached the table paler than death ; and Mrs. Somerive, convinced that something was the matter below, though she could not conjecture what, arose from her seat, and taking a candle said, “ What can have happened ? Selina, my child—if you know it, for God’s sake

fake tell me !——Alas !” added she recollecting all that had happened to her within so short a space——“ after all I have suffered, what can I have to fear ?”

She now approached the door, while neither Selina nor the servant had courage to stop her.—But in the passage she was met by Hannah, whom Orlando, mistrusting the skill of his first messenger, had sent up while he waited himself at the foot of the stairs. Mrs. Somerive, more convinced from the appearance of the maid, that some alarming circumstance had happened, was struck with the idea of fire, and calling to her two daughters to follow her, said : “ The lower part of the house is on fire—let us, if it is so, make our escape.—Selina ! Emma ! my children ! let me at least save something.”

“ Dear ma’am,” exclaimed Hannah, “ how you do fright yourself !—Lord ! there’s no fire below, I assure you : I’m sure if there was, we should not stand staring here ; but don’t be frightened, pray, ma’am ! nothing at all is the matter, but very good

news

news—Come, ma'am; pray go back into the room and sit down, and make yourself easy; you can't imagine, I'm sure, as that I would go for to deceive you."

Mrs. Somerive, hardly knowing what to believe, returned into the room; and Hannah following her, said—"Now, ma'am, as you be so calm I'll tell you, it is the young captain, ma'am, your son—he is not dead, thank God."

"Not dead!" cried Mrs. Somerive, "my Orlando alive! Oh! it is impossible; don't be so inhuman as to awaken such hopes, only to aggravate my misery. He is dead, and I shall never see him more!" "No, no," said Perseus, "young captain's alive." "He is indeed, ma'am," cried Hannah. "Where?" said Selina, "where is my brother?" "He is below, miss," said she, in a low voice.—Selina rushed out of the room, and Orlando caught her in his arms. Emma, divided between her fears for her mother, who rested almost insensible on the arm of the servant, and the anxious desire to see her brother, trembled
and

and wept a moment ; and then seeing him actually enter, Selina resting on his arm, she uttered a faint shriek, and flew back towards her mother, at whose feet Orlando kneeling, besought her to recollect and compose herself. She threw her arms round him, but convulsive sobs were the only signs she gave of recollection ; while the servant was bathing her temples, and her two daughters entreating her, for their sakes, to assume a composure, which their own extreme agitation proved they did not themselves possess.

The scene was too painful, though produced by excess of happiness, to last long. The certainty that her son, her beloved Orlando, was living, was joy to which the mind of Mrs. Somerive, long weighed down by affliction, could not sustain without feeling what almost approached to a momentary deprivation of reason ; but the manly tenderness of Orlando, who argued with her, and the lively sensibility of her two girls, who hung around her, and entreated her not to destroy herself, now that
they

they were so blest as to have their brother restored to them, at length called her to a greater serenity of mind ; yet as she looked at Orlando, she started, she trembled, and seemed to doubt whether she was awake ; and when she spoke to him of his father, she relapsed into such inarticulate expressions of agonizing sorrow, that her children, looking in consternation at each other, dreaded the consequence, so much had she in those moments the appearance of a person about to lose her reason.

There was another topic which had not during the first hour of their incoherent conference been touched ; and Orlando, who dreaded it, endeavoured to avoid it. This was the loss of his sister Isabella ; for that she had perished at sea, in their ill-starred voyage to America, he now more than ever believed. He tried therefore to call off the attention of his mother from what she had lost ; and to convince her, that not merely her son was restored to her, but restored to her as affectionate, and as
much

much attached to his family, as when in an evil hour he quitted it.

Mrs. Somerive, feeling herself unequal to some kind of conversation that evening, confined herself, when she was able to do more than gaze at her son, to questions that related wholly to himself. She observed how very much he was altered—that his hair, of which in his infancy and youth she had been so vain, was grown much darker, and had been cut close to his head. Orlando, to escape from subjects which he thought would be from their catastrophes more painful to her, gave her, or rather attempted to give her, a short history of his adventures, from his leaving New-York till his return to England; but when he came to speak of the wounds he had received, and of his being carried up the country by the Iroquois, she became so extremely faint, that Selina advised her, and she consented to desist from any farther enquiries, till she was better able to bear the relation of Orlando's sufferings. At the request of her children she consented to go

early to rest, where Emma was to remain with her till she became more calm; and when Selina had seen her in bed, and left her in much quieter spirits, she returned to Orlando, who was in an agony of impatience to enquire about Monimia, which in his mother's presence he had not dared to alleviate or to betray.

When his sister returned to him, they both sat down by the fire; and the soft-tempered Selina yielded to those emotions, which during her mother's alarming situation she had struggled to suppress. Orlando, his eyes overflowing, tenderly kissed her hand, and said—"Are these tears, my own Selina, given to past sorrows? or are they excited by your knowledge of tidings yet to come, that will wound the heart of your brother worse than any of the accumulated miseries which he has told you he has collected since his landing in England? —Monimia! what is her fate, Selina? Where is she? am I completely miserable?" He could not go on, nor could his sister immediately answer him—"You do

not

not speak, Selina," cried he eagerly
I can hear nothing worse than my fears suggest, nor can any torment equal this horrid suspense."

"Indeed," answered Selina, in a tremulous voice—"indeed I know no reason to believe that you ought to be in despair about her, but"—"But!" exclaimed he—"but what?—You believe—you don't know? Have you not *seen* her then, Selina? Is it possible you can have been so cruel to her, and to me, as to have abandoned her, because she was abandoned by all the rest of the world, because you thought me dead....? Oh, Selina! should you not therefore have cherished, with redoubled tenderness, her who was so very dear to me?"

"Have patience with me, my dear brother," replied Selina—"pray, have patience with me; and do not, do not condemn me unheard, nor suppose that I would willingly neglect or forsake her whom you loved, and whom I loved too. But"

“ You have however forsaken her! you do not know where she is now ?”

“ No indeed, I do not,” answered Selina—“ nor have I heard of her for many many months.”

“ Well,” cried Orlando, with a deep sigh, “ I have patience, you see, Selina—I do not beat my breast, nor dash myself against the wall. I am wretched, my sister; but I will believe you could do nothing in performance of your solemn promise, nothing to avert such extreme wretchedness, and I will not reproach you.”

“ You will have no cause,” replied the weeping Selina; “ indeed, Orlando, you will have none, when you have heard all I have to say—Oh! if you did but know all we have suffered !”

“ Poor Monimia!” sighed Orlando, “ she too has suffered, and in this general wreck I have lost her—You do not even know then,” continued he, “ you do not even know if she yet lives? I would rather hear of her death, than of her being exposed to all the dangers I dread for her, perhaps to disgrace,

disgrace, to shame, to infamy.....”

This idea was too horrible ; he started from his chair, wildly traversed the room ; and it was some time before Selina could persuade him to listen quietly to the relation he yet continued to demand of her.

C H A P. V.

“**W**HEN you left us, my brother,” said Selina, “we hardly thought it possible that any sorrow could exceed what your departure and the apparent estrangement of Philip inflicted on us all; yet in a very few days we learned that, heavy as these evils were, they were only the beginning of that long train of calamity which was about to overtake us. Isabella disappeared within two days, and left a letter to say that she was gone with Captain Warwick to America.”

“And pray tell me,” said Orlando, interrupting her, “was my poor father extremely hurt at her elopement?”

“Not so much at her elopement, as at her having deceived him; for I do not believe,

believe, Orlando, that my father ever thought of Isabella's marrying General Tracy without pain and doubts of her future happiness. But it grieved him severely to reflect that Isabella was capable of deception, which, notwithstanding the rashness of her going away with a man she hardly knew, must have been meditated for some days."

"Did my father believe me to have been a party in this deception?"

"Of that he sometimes doubted: yet, after dwelling on those doubts a moment, he would say, "No—Orlando could never be acquainted with the plan of these two young people;—Orlando would not have concealed their intentions from me—Orlando never in his life deceived me—He is all integrity and candour—"

"And in this persuasion my father died?"

"Yes, and never spoke of you, Orlando, but as the hope and reliance of us all."

Orlando sighed deeply, reflecting that he had not deserved in this single instance the confidence of his father; yet he rejoiced

that, believing him ignorant of his sister's flight, this opinion of his integrity had not been impaired where it could have done no good to have known the truth, and would only have inflicted another wound on his father's heart. Selina proceeded.

“ We received your letter from Portsmouth, and some days afterwards another from Isabella—I believe it was near a fortnight afterwards—She was about to embark for America with her husband, who had hired a small vessel for that purpose, having missed his passage.—This, in some degree, quieted the apprehensions of my father about my sister ; though, as General Tracy almost immediately disinherited his nephew, we had the mortification of knowing that Isabella had married in what is called a very indiscreet way.—However, as nothing could be objected to Captain Warwick, but his conduct towards his uncle, and his consequent want of fortune ; and as the young people seemed to be passionately attached to each other, my father seemed gradually to lose his anger, and to recover

recover his spirits; when a new instance of Philip's cruel disregard for us all threw him into an illness of so dangerous a nature, or rather so hastened the progress of that which uneasiness about him had first brought on, that he was soon given up by the physicians. It was then that, believing himself dying, and feeling more concern for the state in which he was about to leave us than for his own dissolution, he sent to Mrs. Rayland to come to him—a step which, he said, was very hazardous, but which he could not satisfy himself without taking. She came; we were none of us present at the conversation—but my father told us, as soon as she was gone, that his mind was now quite easy, and that he should die content, at least as far as related to pecuniary affairs; for Mrs. Rayland had assured him, that in her last will she had given you the Rayland estate, and entailed it all upon your posterity, on condition of your taking the name and bearing the arms of Rayland only; that she had set apart a sum for the purchase of a baronet's

title; and that was the only money, except legacies to her servants to the amount of eight thousand pounds in the whole, which she had appropriated—having given you all the rest of her real and personal estate; and my father said that the latter had accumulated much more than he was aware of.

“ I am sure, said he, when he had told us this—I am sure that Orlando will use, as he ought to do, the power that is thus put into his hands to secure the provision for you, my love (speaking to my mother), and for our dear girls—Nay, that, if our poor unhappy Philip should, as my fears prognosticate, utterly dissipate his paternal fortune, that he too will find a resource in the fraternal affection of his younger brother. In this persuasion my father became much easier, and, we hoped, grew much better: but a discovery that he very unluckily made by opening a letter intended for my brother, which, from the names being alike, he thought was his own—a discovery that Philip was actually in treaty with Stockton
for

for the sale of his future interest in the estate at West Wolverton, quite undid all the good effects of Mrs. Rayland's generosity, and in less than a fortnight we lost our dear father—who, alas! Orlando, died of a broken heart!

“ I will not distress you with a description of the terrible scene—I mean that of his last hours; for, though he died calmly, recommending us to your protection and to that of Heaven, the distraction of my mother is not to be described; and I never think of it but my heart sinks within me.—When the first shock was a little over, my mother reflected on the necessity of her living for us, unprotected and helpless as we were, and she became more tranquil; though I am sorry to say that the presence of my brother Philip, who came down as soon as he heard of my father's death, did not serve to assist her in the recovery of her spirits.—On the contrary, his evident wish that we might soon remove from the house, and his bringing down a mistress, whom he seemed impatient to put into it, were far

from being cordials to a mind so oppressed with her recent loss.—The only hope that sustained her was your return and succeeding to the Rayland estate: but even this comfortable hope was diminished and embittered by a thousand fears:—days, and weeks, and months, were passed, and we had not heard of your arrival at New-York; but learned that the fleet of transports, with which you sailed, was dispersed by a storm, and some of the vessels lost. This I heard, for ill news is always communicated early; but I kept it from my mother till Mrs. Rayland's impatience, who sent continually for news of you, and at length expressed her fears for you, in consequence of the accounts she saw in the newspapers, discovered it; and added to all the sufferings of my poor mother, doubts of your safety, which were more dreadful than any.—

“Mrs. Rayland, who had always disliked my mother, and, as I thought, us till now, seemed much more disposed than she used to be to shew us all kindness, and really
seemed

seemed concerned for my father's death. She made us all a present for mourning; and used to invite us often to the Hall, and I believe would have taken us to live there if Mrs. Lennard would have let her. But that good for nothing old woman, who had her own purposes to answer by it, would never leave any of us a moment alone with Mrs. Rayland—who often seemed to have an inclination to speak to my mother, and to be checked in what she intended to say by the presence of Lennard, who, in proportion as the old lady became more feeble through age, and as her mind became weaker, seemed to acquire over her more power: though it often appeared to me that Mrs. Rayland submitted to it rather from habit than from choice, and had not resolution to throw off a yoke she had been accustomed to so many years—”

“But, my Selina,” cried Orlando, “you have not all this while said a word of Monimia.”

“We contrived to meet,” replied Selina, “every Monday, according to your injunction;

junction; except when my poor father lay so dangerously ill, and after his death. And though these short interviews were passed almost always in tears on both sides, they were the only pleasure we either of us tasted; and we have often said, that the consolation of the rest of the week was, that Monday would return at the beginning of the next!

“ I missed meeting Monimia for three weeks, for the melancholy reason I have assigned; and on the fourth I hastened, at the usual hour, to the place of our appointment, the bench near the boat-house, where I saw Monimia waiting for me. If my mourning and dejected looks struck her with concern, I was not less shocked to see her look so very pale, thin, and dejected—We could neither of us speak for some time, for our tears choked us, till at length she recovered voice enough to say, with deep sobs that seemed almost to burst her heart, that she should never see me more; that even this little comfort of meeting by stealth was denied her; for that
her

her aunt had determined to send her away, and to put her apprentice to a person who kept an haberdasher's and milliner's shop at Winchester, who had agreed to take her for a small premium, and that she was to go in two days.

“ Amazed and distressed by this intelligence, I enquired why her aunt would do this ? and she told me, that the importunity of Sir John Belgrave, and his perpetual attempts to see her by the same means by which you had formerly found access to her room, compelled her, in order to avoid him, to tell her aunt of the door in the turret ; and after enduring a great deal of very cruel usage, and having been repeatedly threatened with Mrs. Rayland's displeasure and with being turned out of the house, her aunt first removed her into her room ; and then, finding that inconvenient, had the door in the lower room at the bottom of the stairs bricked up, and Monimia returned to her former apartment—from whence she was hardly ever suffered to stir out but for a walk in the park, and even then

then was ordered not to go out of sight of the house. So that it had always been at a great risk that, while we did meet, she used to run as far as the fir-wood on those mornings.—“ My aunt,” said poor Monimia as she told me all this, “ my aunt was always very cruel to me ; but now she was much more so than ever ; for the strange and ridiculous fancy she had taken to Roker, who now lived almost always in the house, though Mrs. Rayland did not know it, made her jealous of every body, but particularly of me, who detested the man so much that I was quite as desirous to avoid him, as she was that I should not meet him—while the odious fellow affected to be jealous of her attachment to me, though all the time he took every opportunity of speaking to me very impertinently ; but between my aunt’s watchfulness that I should never be in the room with him, and my own to shun him, I escaped tolerably well from his insolent speeches, and never regretted my confinement, unless when I feared, my dear
Selina,

Selina, it would prevent my seeing you.— Now, however, for some reason or other, my aunt has taken it into her head that I shall not stay at the Hall any longer.—I cannot guess why I am more obnoxious to her than formerly, as she seems to have settled to marry and secure her dear Mr. Roker to herself, unless it is because Mrs. Rayland seems lately to grow more fond of me; and as my aunt is engaged with her lover more than with her mistress, I have been more about her, and she seems always satisfied with my services—which makes Mrs. Lennard quite in a rage with me sometimes; and often of late she tells me I am a fly, deceitful girl, and she'll blow me up with her lady—such is her expression, if I dare to fancy that I have any interest with her. This she has repeated so often lately, that knowing as I do that the discovery she has made of my meeting Orlando would entirely ruin him with Mrs. Rayland, I think that, however dreadful it is, Selina, for me to leave this place, where only I can have an opportunity

nity of weeping with you and talking of him, I had much better do so than hazard, by my stay, incurring my aunt's unreasonable displeasure, since it may so much hurt Orlando;—and as she told me again, about ten days since, that she was determined to send me off to Winchester, and had given her lady such good reasons for it that she advised it, and had promised to give me the apprentice fee, I answered, that I had rather go than be burthenfome to her.—So she wrote immediately, and the answer came yesterday, which fixes my departure for next Thursday.” Thus, my dear brother, our dear injured Monimia related to me the circumstances which had produced this resolution, so distressing to me. Some of them indeed, particularly what related to that hateful Sir John Belgrave, I had heard before; for he used not only to persecute poor Monimia with attempts to speak to her by means of a servant—Jacob I think she called him—who was unluckily let into the secret, but wrote to her continually letters which, from the high promises

mises they contained, might have tempted many young women so uncomfortably situated as she was—"Eternal curses light on him!" exclaimed Orlando; "he shall feel, the scoundrel shall feel, that she is not now so unprotected as to suffer him to make his insulting proposals with impunity."

Alarmed by his vehemence, Selina repented that she had said so much; yet, by way of palliation, added—"The last letter Monimia shewed me"

"Why did she open—why receive his d——d letters?" cried Orlando.

"They were forced upon her," answered his sister, "in a thousand ways, which I hope she will one day have an opportunity of telling you herself, though it would take up too much time were I to do it now.—However, I am sure that when she related to me how she was beset with them, I saw no cause at all to blame her; and as for the last letter, of which I was going to speak, it was sent in form under cover of one to her

her aunt, and contained a proposal of marriage."

"Of marriage!"

"Yes indeed, and even offered settlements—and begged pardon for his former ill behaviour: it was after Monimia was obliged to complain to Mrs. Lennard of his behaviour, and was removed to her room. And one great cause of her aunt's displeasure afterwards was, that Monimia positively refused to marry Sir John, which her aunt insisted that, if he was in earnest, she should do. Monimia, however, wrote to him a refusal, in the most positive terms we could invent together; and after that she heard no more of him till she left the Hall."

"Well," said Orlando; "but, for Heaven's sake tell me! has she heard of him then since she left the Hall?—and where is she now?"

"Would to God, my dearest brother," replied Selina, "that I could tell you!—We settled to correspond, not-without some difficulty, because, though my mother herself,
if

if I had dared to tell her the truth, would not I am sure have refused to let me write to and hear from her, yet as I did not dare, and she knows I have no correspondents but my sister Philippa, who now and then writes to me from Ireland, it is very natural for her to ask what letter I receive. However, I contrived it, and did for you, Orlando, what worlds should not bribe me to do for myself; I mean, deceive my mother, or rather act without her knowledge; yet I hope it was innocent."

"Not only innocent, but meritorious," said Orlando warmly; "but you still do not answer me, Selina, where is Monimia now?"

"Alas! Orlando, have I not already undergone the pain of telling you that I do not know?"

"Not know!"

"Indeed, I do not.—Amidst all the wretched scenes I passed through upon Mrs. Rayland's death—our very cruel disappointment in reading a will, so unlike what we were taught to expect—and Philip's

lip's horrible conduct, which drove us from the country, and from our father's house, now sold, with every thing almost in it, to Mr. Stockton:—amidst all the exertions I was compelled to make to support my poor mother, who seemed to be sinking under our complicated misfortunes; misfortunes rendered almost insupportable, by the dreadful increase of our fears for your life:—believe me, Orlando, amidst all this, I never forgot to write punctually, according to our agreement, to our beloved Monimia; and for some time she punctually answered my letters:—but for these last five weeks never having any letter from her, I grew very uneasy, and last week wrote to the person with whom her aunt had placed her, and a few days since I had an answer.”

“What answer?” enquired Orlando, with breathless eagerness.

“None from the person herself to whom my sweet friend was bound, but from a relation of hers, who informed me that Mrs. Newill had, in consequence of some embarrassment in her affairs, left Winchester, and

was

was gone to London with her apprentice, where she was under the necessity of remaining concealed till her affairs were settled ; and then proposed going into business in London, if she could find friends to set her up."

" Distraction and death !" cried Orlando, striking his hands together, and starting from his chair, " I shall be driven to phrensy !—And is it to a person thus situated that my poor Monimia is entrusted ? and, under the pretence of becoming an apprentice, is she given up to a mean servitude ? or perhaps sold to that detestable Belgrave, by her necessitous mistress ? But I will pursue him to the end of the world. — Good God !" added he, walking quickly about the room, " if something very dreadful had not happened to her, she would have written to you—surely, Selina, she would have written, wherever situated."

" Perhaps," replied Selina, still more apprehensive of the effects of that despair he seemed to feel at this account—" perhaps her not having written may have been

owing to her having never received that letter of mine, which contained a direction whither to write to me."

"What direction?" enquired Orlando.

"To this house," replied his sister, "where we have only been about a month; having got it cheap of a gentleman who was obliged to go abroad, and was glad to let it on reasonable terms, for the few remaining months of his lease. We were before in lodgings in Holles-Street, and I knew nothing of our removal hither till a few days before it happened. The moment I did, I wrote to Monimia; but that letter was among those she never received."

This conversation, in which the impatient anguish of Orlando only found increase, was now interrupted by the entrance of his youngest sister, who came down to tell him and Selina that Mrs. Somerive, hearing them talk below, and supposing the melancholy account Selina had to give Orlando might affect him too much, entreated him to put off any farther conversation till the

next

next day, but for the present to take some refreshment and go to bed.

Orlando, vexed that the agitation of his mind had betrayed him into vehemence which had alarmed and distressed his mother, promised to obey; and endeavouring to stifle his torments, he consented to sit down to supper, and requested that he might see his mother, and endeavour to calm the inquietude she expressed for his health. She desired he would come up to her; but when he approached the bed, he could not speak to her—he could only take the hand she gave him, and bathe it with tears, in spite of his endeavours to check them, as he pressed it to his lips. In a broken voice, however, he at length collected resolution enough to assure her, in answer to her tender enquiries, that it was true he had been much affected by the detail his sister had at his own request given him, yet that he was now recovered, and after a night's rest should regain fortitude enough to consider his own situation, and what it was best to do, without shrinking from any task, by

executing which he would contribute to her comfort. His mother blessed him—and, expressing the utmost solicitude about his health, said—“ Make yourself, dear Orlando, easy about me ; for, after so great, so unexpected, and I fear so undeserved a blessing as having you restored to me, and to your dear sisters, I should be unthankful and unworthy of such happiness if I dared to murmur.”

As the repose of Mrs. Somerive would not, Orlando thought, be much promoted by the continuance of this affecting conversation, he shortened it as much as he could, and, in pursuance of his promise, went, in hopes of transient forgetfulness, to his bed.

C H A P. VI.

IF Orlando had known Monimia was in safety—if he had known where, after this cruel absence, he might find her, and assure her of the sentiments of an heart more fondly than ever devoted to her, all the cruel circumstances that had happened in his absence would have been supportable ; but when, in addition to the death of his father, and the dispersion of his family, his loss of the Rayland estate, and the ruin of his brother (for, being now utterly undone, and unable to carry on the law-suits he had begun, he had for some time disappeared, and no one knew what was become of him)—when to all these distracting certainties was added his fear of finding Monimia, or finding her innocent, lovely, and devoted to him, as he had left her ; he was no longer

able to check the violence of his apprehension ; nor could he, for some hours after awaking from his short and disturbed sleep, collect his thoughts enough to form any plan for his future conduct.

Two things, however, were immediately necessary : one was, to find some method of tracing his lost Monimia ; and the other, to find the means of subsisting, not only without being a burthen to his mother, whose income was so very small, but to endeavour if possible to make hers and his sister's situation more comfortable. This he knew the slender pay of an ensign would not enable him to do ; and, while he knew that nothing could be more dreadful to his mother than the idea of his going abroad again, he felt that few means of passing his time would to him be so disagreeable as that of remaining unoccupied, and disarmed as he was by his parole, while he yet called and considered himself as a soldier.

He at length determined to enquire how far, as his commission was given him, he could dispose of it ; and if that could be

be done, to put the money it would produce into some business. But even this arrangement was secondary to his ardent desire to gain some intelligence of Monimia. He wrote as soon as he arose in the morning to the relation of the person with whom she lived at Winchester, entreating a direction to that person, and assuring her to whom he wrote, that his inquiry was not meant to do any injury, but rather might produce some advantage to the person under inconvenient circumstances. He then, after some deliberation, determined to write to Mrs. Lennard, or, as she was now called, Mrs. Roker ;—and, as he had now no longer any thing to fear from the resentment of his benefactress, he openly avowed to Mrs. Roker the purpose of his enquiry ; informing her that, if her niece was unmarried, and still retained for him her former affection, he intended to offer her his hand.

Having thus taken all the means which his anxiety immediately suggested, he joined his mother and sisters at breakfast with some degree of apparent composure,

and gave them, as he found his mother now better able to bear it, a sketch of his adventures upon the road ; at which they were so much affected, that he soon found it necessary to drop the conversation ; and saying he should walk out till dinner, he took his way to a coffee-house much frequented by military men, near St. James's, where he hoped to hear something of Warwick, as well as to learn whether the General (whom he dared not mention to his mother lest it should occasion enquiries about Isabella which he could not answer) had consoled himself with some other young woman for his cruel mortification in regard to Isabella, and revenged himself by disinheriting his nephew for the loss of his intended bride.

He met several of his old acquaintance ; one of whom very willingly gave him all the information he wanted about his commission ; but told him that he could not, he thought, dispose of it without applying to General Tracy, from whose hands he had received it. This Orlando determined to
do ;

do; and as he was impatient to be at some certainty, he went immediately to his house in Grosvenor-Place.

It happened that the General, who was now almost always a martyr to the gout, had given orders to be denied to every body who might chance to call, except two persons whom he named, and for one of whom the man who opened the door, and who had only lately come into the house, mistook Orlando, who was therefore ushered up stairs, where, in a magnificent room, the General sat in a great chair, supported by pillows, and his limbs wrapped in flannel. Orlando was much altered, and the General was near-sighted; so that he was obliged to approach, and to announce himself. Forgetting for a moment his disabled limbs, Tracy almost started out of his chair; but then recollecting probably that a man of fashion should never suffer himself to appear discomposed at any thing, he recovered himself, and coldly desired Orlando to sit down.

Orlando, affected by seeing a man whom

he had last seen as a guest of his father, gave, in a mild and low voice, into a little history of his adventures; the parole he had given, which precluded him from serving during the present war; and his wish therefore to transfer his commission to some one who might not be under the same disadvantages.

General Tracy heard him with repulsive indifference, and then said—"Well, Sir, the commission is yours, and you are perfectly at liberty to keep or to dispose of it.—I am very far from meaning to trouble you with my advice; but as your expectations of Mrs. Rayland's fortune are all disappointed, I should have supposed a profession might have been found useful to you. However, Sir, you are the best judge. The commission is yours—I am sorry I am too much indisposed to have the pleasure of your company longer, and I wish you a good day." He then rang, and his valet appearing, he bade him open the door.

Orlando, thus dismissed, retired in anger, which he had no means of venting;
and

and went back to the coffee-house, where his friend waited for him, to whom he forbore, however, to speak of Tracy's behaviour; because he could not but feel that if he believed him, as he probably did, concerned in the elopement of Isabella with Warwick, he had some grounds for his resentment—a resentment which, when Orlando reflected on his humiliation, and his being now tormented by bodily infirmities, he was too generous not to forgive. His friend, a lieutenant in the 51st, now went with him to the office of an agent, to treat about his commission; and, as they went, related to him, that it was believed at the War-office, Warwick had perished at sea, as there never was an instance of a man's being missing for so many months; and that, had he been taken prisoner by an American or French privateer, and carried to some of their places of rendezvous, he would before now have written home, or he would have been exchanged. This appeared to be but too probable; but still Orlando, in recollecting how he had been

situated himself, entertained a faint hope that they might yet hear of his friend and his sister, though the dangers and difficulties to which the latter might have been exposed made him tremble. Having put his business in the proper train, he returned home, meditating, as he went, on all the strange and disagreeable occurrences that had happened since he used to traverse these streets with Warwick, who had lodgings in Bond-street.—All the scenes he had passed through arose in lively succession in his mind, and that for the first time since his landing in England; for the shocks he received on his arrival at Rayland Hall, and by hearing of the death of his father, had for a while absorbed all other recollections.—He now considered that, when his commission was disposed of, his whole fortune would be only between three and four hundred pounds; yet, with the sanguine spirit of a young man, which his former severe disappointments had not checked, he believed that, with a sum so moderate, he could, by dint of perseverance

verance and industry, find some reputable employment, by which he might not only be enabled to assist his mother, but to keep a wife—as he was resolved, the moment he could find Monimia, to marry her; and in this only he thought he might be forgiven for not consulting his mother—to his duty and affection towards whom he never meant that any other attachment should be injurious.

He had not yet had time to talk to Selina, of the law-suit which he heard Philip had instituted for the recovery of the Rayland estate; but he had in the evening an opportunity of talking about it to Selina, and heard that it now languished, partly for want of money, and partly through Philip's neglect, who had of late again disappeared, and therefore nothing was likely to be made of the suit.

Orlando enquired against whom, and on what grounds it was begun?—and learned, though Selina did not very clearly understand the terms, that it was against the reverend body who claimed the estate,

one of whom (Doctor Hollybourn) had administered as executor; because the will nominated to that office the dean of the diocese for the time being, to which the doctor had succeeded a few days only before Mrs. Rayland's death; and that there was not only a suit at common law, but in chancery.

As there was great reason to believe that there was another will entirely in his favour, which had been either secreted or destroyed, Orlando determined to attempt discovering this, and got a recommendation from his friend the lieutenant (for he was too much disgusted by the reception he met with from Mr. Woodford to trouble him again) to a young attorney, before whom he laid the affair, and who gave him great encouragement to pursue it.

But the occupation in which this engaged him, or in which he was engaged by the sale of his commission, that was now within a few days of being completed, could not for a moment detach his mind from those fears which continually haunted him for
Monimia.

Monimia.—He waited with anxiety for the answer he expected from Winchester, which he had hoped to have, as he had very earnestly pressed for it, by the return of the post; but that, and another, and another post arrived without any letter; and he wrote again, waited again three days, and was again disappointed of an answer.—He now determined to go down himself, and find out the woman from whom Selina had received the information of Monimia's removal; but, the day on which he had hired an horse, and was on the point of setting out for that place, he was visited by a man of between fifty and sixty, who sent in his name, in great form, as Mr. Roker.

If a painter had occasion to put upon his canvas a figure that should give an horrible idea of the worst, meanest, and most obnoxious passions—and to represent the most detestable character in Pandæmonium, where, on the brow, villany sits enjoying the misery it occasions—where every rascal vice, concealed by cowardice and cunning, are mingled with arrogance, malice, and cruelty

cruelty—where a nose, the rival of Bar-dolph's, depends over a mouth “grinning horribly a ghastly smile,”—and scornful eyes, askance, seemed to be watching, with inverted looks, the birth of chicanery in the brain—this fiend-like wretch would have been a fine study. His shambling figure appeared to have been repaired with straw and rags, since it had suffered depredations on a well-earned gibbet—A figure more adapted to the purpose of scaring crows, was never exhibited in former days as Guy Vaux, the Pope, or the Pretender.

Orlando was somewhat surprised to behold this strange being, who, strutting up close to him, put his nose almost in his face, and then, in a sonorous voice, said—

“Your name, Sir, is Somerive?”

“I suppose you know it is,” replied Orlando, “since you come to seek me by it.”

“You wrote, Sir, to my nephew's wife, Mrs. Rachel Roker—”

“Well, Sir, and I expected Mrs. Rachel Roker would have answered my letter.”

“No, Sir—*We* make it a rule never to
put

put our hands to any thing—We desire to know, Sir, your reasons for writing—I call, Sir, in behalf of Mrs. Rachel Roker—You ask after a young woman, Sir, whom she kept out of charity—Now, Sir, though we never do give answers to matters so irrelevant, my client, that is my niece, Mrs. Rachel Roker, does hereby inform you, that she the said Rachel—”

“ Orlando, anxious as he was, and trembling in the expectation of hearing something of Monimia, could not check his indignation and impatience—“ Your niece! your client!—What is all this to me?” said he.

“ Sir,” cried the fiend, “ have patience if you please—I go on in this matter according to the due course, and such as I always observe in all my business, whether it relates to Sir John Winnerton Weezle, Baronet, my very worthy client, or any other. Now, Sir,—Nay, Sir—(seeing Orlando about to speak)—nay, Sir, hear me! and when I have done, Sir, you shall speak in turn—”

“ You

“ You will be pleased then,” said Orlando, “ to be brief, as patience is not my forte.”

He felt much disposed to prove this assertion by turning the fellow down stairs; but, recollecting that he might thus lose all trace of Monimia, which her aunt might otherwise afford him, he checked himself: and the man proceeded in an harangue of some length, tending to give an high opinion of his abilities, and of his skill in conducting causes; laying much stress on the confidence with which he was treated by Sir John Winnerton Weezle, Baronet, and his brother Thomas Weezle, Esquire, who seemed to have taken, from their rank, great hold on his imagination: and he at length concluded with saying, that the girl Orlando enquired after had behaved most ungratefully, to his niece Mrs. Rachel Roker, and had contemptuously refused to marry advantageously, to a Baronet, a man of great rank, Sir John Berkely Belgrave, Baronet;—an acquaintance of his client, and very good friend, Sir John Winnerton

Weezle, Baronet, and Thomas Weezle, Esquire, his brother:—wherefore Mrs. Rachel Roker had discarded her; and the person to whom she was bound apprentice was now a prisoner for debt in some of the London prisons, and this girl had left her for another service, nobody knowing whither she was gone.”

This account almost drove Orlando to distraction. From the man's coming himself on a message with which he had so little to do; and from several other observations he made while he was talking, it seemed as if he had some particular reason for wishing to put an end to all farther enquiry on the part of Orlando—who now, stifling his detestation, asked if he could not see Mrs. Roker, formerly Mrs. Lennard? The attorney said, No! that she was not only at a great distance from London, but kept her bed, and saw nobody. In the course of these enquiries, which he now insisted upon some answer to, he found that this Roker and his nephew were employed by the reverend body of clergy to defend their right

to the Rayland estate against Philip Somerive; and it was easy to see, that the arrival of Orlando in England was the thing in the world these worthy gentlemen the least expected and the least wished.—

When this hateful being was gone, Orlando, after a moment's reflection, resolved upon visiting all those receptacles of misery in London where poverty is punished by loss of liberty, and where, in a land eminent for its humanity, many thousands either perish, or are rendered by confinement and desperation unfit to return to society—where vice and misfortune are confounded, and patient wretchedness languishes unpitied, unrelieved, unknown—while villany shews that, if there is money to support it, it will triumph in despite of punishment.

Selina knew the name of the person—Mrs. Newill, to whom Monimia had been consigned; and Orlando, making a memorandum of it in his pocket-book, with such other circumstances as might lead to a discovery, set out on his melancholy search.

He had now been near a fortnight in
London,

London, and had in a great measure recovered his looks—so that he was no longer a stranger to the few acquaintance he had : and his mother beheld with satisfaction the same Orlando, on whose fine figure and ingenuous countenance she had formerly so fondly prided herself.

His first visit was to the Fleet-prison—He enquired of every one likely to inform him, if the person whom he named to them was there? But mistrust seemed universal in that scene of legal wretchedness; and, with an heart bleeding at the thoughts of there being such complicated miseries, and that man had the power to inflict them on his fellow-creatures, he almost wished himself again among the cypress swamps and pathless woods of uncultivated America, that he might fly from the *legal* crimes to which such scenes were owing; when, indulging this mournful train of thought, he quitted the prison, and walked slowly up Holborn Hill.

There was a crowd just before he reached St. Andrew's church, and several coaches
stood

stood at the door of an haberdasher's shop. In making his way by them, a female figure, very smartly and somewhat tawdrily dressed, took his arm and cried—"Ah, Sir! your name is Mr. Orlando Somerive?" "It is, indeed," replied Orlando; "but I do not know, Madam, how I deserve the honour of your being acquainted with it."

"What! have you forgot me then?" said the lady: "Lord! how soon old acquaintance are forgot!"

Orlando then thought he knew the voice, and had some recollection of the face; but he still hesitated, unable to remember where he had heard or seen either.—"Have you far to go?" said she, still detaining him:—"I have a carriage here, and can put you down—Lord! why, have you really forgot Betsey Richards?"

Orlando now immediately recollected his former acquaintance, and what he had heard of her being entertained as a mistress by Philip occurred to him: as he had been very solicitous ever since his return to see his brother, he now eagerly enquired where
he

he was. "Ah, Lord!" cried the girl, shaking her head, "I have but very so so news to tell you about him, that's the truth—But, dear! one can't talk of them sort of things in the street—why, I shan't bite you, Sir—you may as well get into the coach with me." Orlando, though unwilling to be seen with such a companion, yet, on finding she could give him some information of his brother, determined to accept the offer; and the lady, who called herself Mistress Filmer, then ordered her carriage to advance: and Orlando seated himself by her, in an hired chariot with a black boy in a turban and feathers behind.

Though he was persuaded nobody knew him, he was very much ashamed of the equipage; but, applying himself immediately to learn of his fair companion what he so much wished to know, he listened to her very attentively—and, after some circumlocution in a style peculiar to herself, he learned with inexpressible concern that his brother Philip was a prisoner, for a debt of an hundred and twenty pounds, in the
place

place he had just been visiting; and that Mrs. Filmer, though now under the protection of another person, yet retained so much recollection of her first seducer, and so much gratitude for the sums he had lavished upon her, that she had that morning been to visit him, and only stopped in Holborn to make some purchases before she went to her lodgings in Charlotte-Street.

Orlando could not bear to hear that his unhappy brother was in such a place, without going immediately to him. He staid only, therefore, a moment longer to enquire of Mrs. Filmer, if she had, when she was in the country with his brother (for they had not long before, she said, been down at Stockton's together), heard what was become of Monimia. She would have rallied him on his constancy, but he could not a moment endure to be trifled with; and, finding she knew nothing of importance, he said he recollected some material business in the city, whither he must return. —Then, stopping the chariot, he wished
her

her a good day, and hastened back to the Fleet-prison.

On enquiry for the person he wanted, he still found some difficulty in being admitted to him: but, on signifying that he was brother to Mr. Somerive, which his resemblance to him immediately confirmed, a turnkey, to whom he gave a shilling, walked before him to the apartment where Philip was confined.

On his entrance, the neglected and altered figure of his brother struck him with the deepest concern—He was sitting at piquet with another prisoner, on a dirty table, where some empty porter pots seemed to signify that they had lately taken their dinner. Philip hardly looked up; and Orlando stood a moment unnoticed, till the man who was with him cried—“Why, 'squire, here's your honour's brother.”

“The devil it is!” replied Philip—
 “By the Lord, though, but—let me see—
 It is he!—why, hast had a resurrection, my honest Rowland?—Thou wert killed and scalped, I thought, by the Cherokees.”

“ I almost wish I had, Philip,” answered Orlando, “ for I think I should have preferred death to what I now see.”

“ Why, to be sure, pleasanter fights may be seen if a man is in luck.—For example, it would have been pleasanter for thee to have come home master of Rayland Hall—Eh ! Sir Knight ?”

“ Good God !” exclaimed Orlando, “ will you never, my brother, be reasonable ? Will you never believe that, notwithstanding your repeated unkindness to me, I can never consider you otherwise than as my brother, and can have no motive in coming hither but to do you good ?”

“ And what good canst do me ? Canst let me out of this cage ? Hast brought any money from the Yankies ? any plunder, my little soldier ? Canst lend me the ready to pay this confounded debt ?”

The person who was with Orlando, now supposing they might be upon business, left them together ; and Philip finding from the generous earnestness of Orlando, that though he had very little money (in fact no
more

more than the price of his commission, which he was to receive in a few days), he was willing to pay his debt, and to share with him all that he should then have left, began to grow more civil to his brother, and did not refuse to lay before him, though his pride seemed cruelly mortified as he did it, the state of his affairs.

C H A P. VII.

THE unfortunate brother of Orlando now related to him, that though his actual debts were very great, the sum he was at present confined for was not much above ninety pounds; and his arrest was at the suit of the very attorney whom he had been persuaded by Stockton to employ—a young and inexperienced man; who having, without knowing what he was about, led his client into very heavy expences, had been, as it seemed, bribed by Roker to abandon him; and now, without returning his papers, had arrested him. Orlando, inexperienced as he still was in the miserable chicane with which our laws are disgraced and counteracted, yet knew that this could not be right, and that some means might be found to procure at least the

the papers such a man detained—This he promised his brother he would do, and take every necessary measure for his speedy release. He then gave Philip all the money he had in his pocket; and, leaving him with an heavy heart, returned home, not only disappointed in his search after Monimia, but that disappointment embittered by the discovery he had made of his brother's situation, whom, now that he was in distress and in prison, Orlando forgave for all the calamities he had brought on his family, and for all the ill offices which jealousy had excited him to be guilty of against himself.

Yet, to his mother he dared not speak of Philip; for, though she at present suffered extreme anguish in believing her son had forsaken her, after having so largely contributed to the dispersion and ruin of his family, she would, he knew, be quite overwhelmed by the intelligence that he was in prison. She had already in bitterness of heart experienced—

“How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is

“To have a thankless child.”

But still that half-broken heart had all the tenderness of a mother within it for this her eldest child, on whom, during his early years, her fondest affections were fixed—and Orlando well knew that the misery he had thus brought upon himself would add an incurable wound to those which his mother had already received.

But, though he endeavoured to conceal the extreme dejection of his spirits on his return, his mother immediately perceived that something had more than usual disturbed him. He told her, however, in answer to her anxious enquiries, that he had been embarrassed by the delays of office in regard to the sale of his commission; and as soon as he could quit her without exciting anew her apprehensions, he left the house, and set out to execute, as far as he could that evening, his promise to his brother, telling his mother and his sisters that he should not be at home to supper.

Baffled in his first attempt to find Mrs.
Newill,

Newill, who was the only person from whom he could hope to hear any intelligence of Monimia, new terrors assailed him; and he thought that, amidst the most dreary hours he had passed in the wilds of America, and among men who have little more rationality than the animals of their desert, he had never suffered such wretchedness as he now felt; for, then, though he was exposed to almost every personal inconvenience, and uncertain whether he should ever again revisit his native country, he fancied Monimia was in safety; but now, every evil that could surround defenceless innocence, and unprotected beauty, was incessantly represented to his imagination; and, in proportion as time elapsed without his being able to gain any intelligence of her, his despair became intolerable—Yet other duties, indispensable duties, demanded his attention, and interrupted his pursuit, which alone could relieve his mind, by keeping alive his hopes of finding her.

His new friend, the young attorney,

H 3

whose

whose name was Carr, told him that he would instantly set about procuring the release of his brother Philip; and if, as he believed, any illegal proceeding had occurred in his confinement, Fisherton, the attorney who was the cause of it, would perhaps be compelled by a little spirit to lower his demands—"I know this man well," said Carr, "and know that nothing but his impudence can equal his ignorance. *That other honour to our profession*, Roker, is well versed in chicane, and knows more of the law, or rather of its abuse, than an honest man would wish to know; but Fisherton is so ignorant that, while his lavish expences continually reduce him to necessities that drive him into bold attempts at robbery, his skill in managing them is so inferior that he is almost always baffled, and has been more than once exposed."

"How then does he contrive to live?" said Orlando: "I learn from Philip that he has a house in town, another in the country, and entertains his clients splendidly at both; and that, in his common discourse, he

he talks as if he was a man of great property."

"Oh! as to that," answered Mr. Carr, "he has had a contested election for a Western borough to carry on for a Nabob; and since, a process to defend for the same worthy personage in Doctors Commons—This comfortable client has been supposed his principal support for some time; and it is wonderful how his wild boasting, in which there is not a syllable of truth, imposes upon the world—He is such a man as Shakespeare somewhere describes—

"A gentleman who loves to hear himself talk, and
"will speak more in an hour than he'll stand to in a
"month."

—I am heartily sorry your brother has got into the hands and into the debt of this yelping fellow; who, even if he could prevail upon himself to be honest, is always from ignorance on a wrong scent. However, we must get him out of so sad a scrape as well as we can; and as all your elder brother's proceedings have been wrong and will only mar ours since that wretched

Roker has purchased his *Solicitor* (for every pettyfogging fellow is now, not an attorney, but a solicitor), we must begin again, and file a bill of discovery against the younger Roker and his wife."

Orlando then pressed his friend (whom he thought a man of talents, and who had all the appearance of being honest without professing it) to set about the release of his brother immediately.—This he willingly agreed to, and said he would instantly go about it to one of the persons concerned, who lived also in Clement's Inn—"I shall not be gone a quarter of an hour," said Carr: "Perhaps you would like to stay till my return—here is a newspaper, if you will amuse yourself with that; but books I have none, but law books, which I suppose you have no taste for."—Orlando assured him that his mind was not in a state to receive amusement from any of the usual resources; and entreated him to go instantly about Philip's business, and allow him to wait in his chambers till his return.

Carr departed; and Orlando sat for a moment,

moment, his eyes fixed on the fire, in sad contemplation, of which Monimia was the principal object. The clerk brought him in candles (for he and Carr had conversed by fire light) and the newspaper; but he was too much occupied by his private distresses to be able to attend to public occurrences, interesting as they were at that period to every Englishman, and particularly to one who had seen what Orlando had seen, of the war then raging with new violence in America.

He read, however, in a lingering expectation of hearing of Warwick, which never wholly forsook him, the list of the killed and wounded in an engagement or rather skirmish which was related in that paper; and when he read that the American soldiers, fighting in defence of their liberties (of all those *rights* which his campaign as a British officer had not made him forget, were the most sacred to an *Englishman*), had marked their route with the blood which flowed from their naked feet in walking over frozen ground, his heart felt for

the sufferings of the oppressed and for the honour of the oppressors *.

But from the contemplation of both, his private miseries recalled him—In laying down the newspaper on a long desk that was in the room, he cast his eyes accidentally on some of the bundles of papers that were ranged on it, tied with red tape, and saw on one—Bagshaw v. Fleming. The name of Fleming instantly brought to his mind his regretted friend the lieutenant, and his heart as instantly reproached him with breach of promise, and want of gratitude, in not having sooner enquired after the family of the lieutenant, who had with his last breath recommended them to his friendship. Nor could he forgive himself for his neglect; though a mind of less generous sensibility might easily have found excuses in the multiplicity of more immediate claims and family dis-

* The perusal of the history of the American Revolution, of Ramsay, is humbly recommended to those Englishmen who doubt whether, in defence of their freedom, any other nation but their own will fight, or conquer.

treffes which had overwhelmed him on his return to England.

When Carr returned, he gave to Orlando a more favourable account of his mission than he had expected ; and as soon as they had agreed upon what was to be done the next day to hasten the liberation of Philip Somerive, Orlando asked him if he had a client of the name of Fleming ? Carr replied that he had, and that she was a widow who was under very melancholy circumstances : “ Her husband,” added he, “ was a lieutenant, killed in America, and she has nothing or very little more than her pension to live upon, with five children, all young ; and is besides involved in a suit by the villany of some of her husband’s relations, which I am defending for her.”

“ Good God !” cried Orlando, “ it is the widow of my dear old friend, whose last breath left his gallant bosom as he, grasping my hand while I knelt on the ground stained with the blood which flowed in torrents from his breast, bade me

be a friend to his poor wife, to his orphan children—And I have neglected this, shamefully neglected it! and have selfishly suffered my own sorrows to absorb me quite.—Where do Mrs. Fleming and her family live?—Where can I see them?—If they are in town I will go to them this evening.”

Carr smiled at the vehemence of his young friend, and said, “What pity it is, Somerive, that such an heart as yours should ever lose this amiable warmth, and become hackneyed in the ways of men!”

“I trust,” answered Orlando, “that it never will; but Carr, you do not answer my question—does Mrs. Fleming reside in London?”

“No,” replied Carr; “she is at present near Christchurch in Hampshire, where a friend has lent her a cottage, for she is by no means in a situation to pay rent for such a house as her family requires.” Orlando then taking an exact direction, determined to see the widow of his deceased friend as soon as he had visited the other prisons of the metropolis in search of Mrs. Newill.

The

The following day, therefore, after passing some time with his brother, who appeared satisfied with the prospect of his immediate release, he went to the King's-Bench prison, and, his enquiry there being fruitless, to the other receptacles of the unhappy debtor; but no such person as a Mrs. Newill was to be heard of, and Orlando returned in deeper despair than ever.

In two days the spirit and assiduity of Mr. Carr had been so effectually exerted that Philip Somerive was released, but at the expence to Orlando of somewhat upwards of an hundred pounds, including the fees which are on these occasions paid to the satellites of our most excellent law; nor would the sum have been so moderate, but from the exertions of Carr, and his threats of exposing the conduct of Fisherton. Orlando fetched his brother away in a hackney-coach to a lodging he had provided for him; where he supplied him with present money, and where he hoped he should be able to support him till something (though he knew not what) should happen

happen to give a fortunate turn to the affairs of their family.

Philip was pensive, silent, and, as Orlando hoped, penitent. He had not as yet spoken of him to his mother; and though the circumstances that would have most sensibly afflicted her were now at an end, Orlando, who saw his mother in that state of spirits which even the sudden opening of a door, or any unexpected noise were sufficient to overset, dared not yet ask her to receive and to forgive a son, who, though she still loved him, had given her so much cause of complaint—as well since, as before his father's death.

The whole fortune of Orlando was now reduced to about two hundred and fifty pounds; for his commission did not produce him quite four. On this fortune, however, he was still bent on marrying Monimia, if he could find her; and of trusting to Providence for the rest.

A few more mornings were still passed in fruitless research. It was now the beginning of January; and this beginning of
Term

Term his bill was to be filed against the persons who were supposed to have any knowledge of Mrs. Rayland's having made another, and a subsequent will. It was in search of these people, of the servants who had lived with her at the time of her death, and of the lawyers who had made the will, that he was now compelled for many days longer to employ himself; every hour increasing the agony of mind with which he thought on the fate of Monimia, while all the consolation he had was in talking of her to Selina, if he could at any time steal an hour with her alone. On these occasions he wearied himself with conjecture as to what was become of her; repeated the same questions on which he had already been often satisfied; and imagined new means of tracing her, which when he pursued, served only to renew his disappointment and regret.

At length—having learned that the lawyer who made the will was dead, and his clerk who had accompanied him to Rayland Hall settled at a town in Wiltshire

shire—he resolved, by the advice of Carr, to go thither in search of him, and then to visit the village near Christchurch, where Mrs. Fleming and her family resided. He communicated this scheme to his mother, who, while she allowed the necessity of his finding a person whose evidence might be so very material to him, could hardly prevail upon herself to let him go for ten days from her; for so long he imagined it would be before he could return.

At length he fixed the day with her approbation, hired an horse for the journey, and took leave of his mother and his sisters. He then visited Philip, whom he found in a very silent, and, as he thought, somewhat sullen mood. He gave him a ten pound bank note, as he complained of being without money; and, in depressed spirits, with hardly a glimpse of hope to cheer his melancholy way, he began his journey.

The weather was severe; but, on the first night of his journey, a deep snow threatened to render his progress more slow,
and

and compelled him to stay till a late hour of the day, that the road might be beaten, for all was now a pathless plain, and he was a stranger to the road. About one o'clock, however, he left the town where he had passed the night, and went slowly on. He was inured to the cold by his abode in America; and in no haste to get to his inn, where nothing awaited him but a solitary supper and mournful reflections.

Again he ran over in his mind every possible circumstance that could rob him of Monimia—and awakened in his breast all the scorpions of distrust, dread, and jealousy; for, whatever attempts he made to conquer so horrible an apprehension, it was to Sir John Belgrave, and to the success of his cruel artifices, that his fears most frequently pointed; and there were moments in which he thought, that, were a person before him who could tell him all he so solicitously desired to know, he should not have courage to ask; for, should he hear that Monimia was lost by the infamous

famous seduction of such a man, he believed he should die on the spot, or lose his reason in the greatness of his sorrow.

It was between ten and eleven o'clock in the evening of his second day's journey, that, in a wild and moory country, where extensive heaths seemed to spread without end before him, he began to think it time to seek a lodging for the night. All around was dreary and silent; and blank, he thought, as his destiny. Yet he wished the torpid sensation that being long exposed to the cold had given to his limbs could reach his heart, which was too acutely sensible! In the midst of the uniform waste stood a small village, the rustic inhabitants of which had long since retired to their hard beds; and every thing was as quiet in their houses as it was around the little church that rose beyond them. Orlando would have enquired the distance to the next post-town, but no human creature appeared, and he passed on; his thoughts (as he compared their peaceful slumbers with the state of his
own.

own troubled mind) assuming a poetical form, in the following

S O N N E T.

While thus I wander, cheerless and unblest,
And find, in change of place, but change of pain ;
In tranquil sleep the village labourers rest,
And taste repose, that I pursue in vain.
Hush'd is the hamlet now ; and faintly gleam
The dying embers from the casement low
Of the thatch'd cottage ; while the moon's wan beam
Lends a new lustre to the dazzling snow.
—O'er the cold waste, amid the freezing night,
Scarce heeding whither, desolate I stray :
For me ! pale eye of evening ! thy soft light
Leads to no happy home ; my weary way
Ends but in dark vicissitude of care :
I only fly from doubt—to meet despair.

After being near an hour longer on his horse, he arrived at Chippenham, where the lawyer lived from whom he expected information ; and going extremely fatigued to an inn, he sent, at an early hour the following morning, to the person in question, who immediately came ; and, inviting him to his house for a farther discussion of
the

the business, he received him there with hospitality, and answered him with candour.

This gentleman, whose name was Walterson, informed him that it was very true he, being then clerk to a Mr. Lewes, accompanied his principal to Rayland Hall, where Mr. Lewes was closetted two days with Mrs. Rayland; after which he was called upon with another person, who he thought was a tenant, or son to a tenant of Mrs. Rayland's, to witness it: but he did not hear the contents, nor know what was afterwards done with the will; relative to which every thing was conducted with great secrecy—That he was employed to engross some other writings about one of Mrs. Rayland's farms; but that he never copied the will, nor knew more of its contents than what passed in conversation afterwards between him and Mr. Lewes—who, as they travelled together to London, afterwards said, in going through the park, out at the north lodge, that he thought Rayland Hall one of the finest old places; he

he had ever seen; and added, speaking of the Somerive family, "And I am very glad that the old lady has determined to give it to the right heirs—because Mr. Somerive is a very worthy man, and that younger son of his a fine young fellow."—That, on some farther questions from him, Mr. Walterson, Mr. Lewes spoke as if the bulk of the fortune was given to Mr. Orlando Somerive.

Orlando made minutes of what Mr. Walterson said, who assured him he would be ready at any time to give his testimony in a court of law—He in vain endeavoured to recollect the name of the person who was witness with him to the will, and whose information he advised Orlando by all means to procure; but he described him as a stout man, between thirty and forty, with a very florid complexion and dark straight hair, who was dressed like a substantial farmer. Orlando, having thanked Mr. Walterson for all his civilities, and received gratefully his advice for the conduct of the business, mounted his horse and proceeded
towards

towards Salisbury, meditating sometimes on the hopes he had of obtaining restitution of the Rayland estate ; but oftener on Monimia, for whose sake more than his own he wished to possess it.

His journey, almost across the whole country of Wilts, was long, and rendered particularly tedious by the vicissitudes of frost and thaw that had prevailed for some days—which had made the roads, where the snow half dissolved had been again suddenly frozen, so dangerous, that he was often under the necessity of leading his horse for many miles together. He proposed, after visiting Mrs. Fleming, to cross the country to Rayland Hall ; and, whatever pain it might cost him to revisit those scenes of his former happiness, to discover, if possible, the person whom Walterston described as having with him witnessed Mrs. Rayland's will.—He suddenly recollected that, in his way, he should be within a few miles of the residence of Mrs. Lennard—for so he called her, forgetting at that moment her change of name ; and that it

could at least do no harm if he saw her, and endeavour to find in her conversation, if not from her candour, something which might lend him a clue for the discovery of Monimia.

C H A P. VIII.

AT Salisbury Orlando determined to make some slight alteration in his plan, and instead of going from thence to Christchurch, to go first into the more eastern part of Hampshire, to the residence of Mrs. Roker; for though this would make his journey considerably longer, yet, having now seized the idea that by this visit some intelligence might be obtained of Monimia, every other consideration yielded to that hope.—Somewhat cheered by it, remote and uncertain as it was, he traversed the dreary flat of Salisbury plain, and by the evening arrived at Winchester, where he vainly enquired for that relation of Mrs. Newill (the person with whom Monimia was placed) who had given his sister Selina all the intelligence she had ever

ever received of her. Nobody knew, or wished to aid his search after an obscure woman who had probably been only a lodger in the place; and with an heart sinking under the disappointments he had already experienced, and those he yet feared, he proceeded to Alresford, near which town was situated the estate which Mrs. Rayland had given her old companion, and which she had so worthily bestowed on Mr. Roker the younger.

It was about one o'clock when Orlando found the place; a red brick house with a court before it, and a garden walled behind, on the banks of the Itching. This had been a farm-house, but had been smartened and new cased by Mr. Roker, who, assuming all the dignity of a man of landed property, was no longer the assistant steward, or the humbly assiduous attorney, but a justice of the peace, and an esquire—a title which he held the more tenaciously, as he suspected that it was believed by other esquires that he had no right to it. He was not indeed very eminent either for

morals or *manners*; but he was a man of property, and a thriving man in the world, and his neighbours were not therefore disposed to trouble themselves either with one or the other. As he still practised the law, he was usually in London in the winter; and of late it was observed, that his ancient spouse was always by indisposition prevented from accompanying him when he accepted the invitations to dinner, which were frequently given to them both by the neighbouring families; and some stories were in circulation not much to the honour of his conjugal affection: but whatever were his domestic faults, he was every where received and considered as a respectable man, because he had every appearance of becoming a rich one.

When Orlando arrived at the outward gate, he left his horse, and proceeded up a gravel walk that led to the door of the house, at which he tapped; a maid servant looked out at the parlour window, of which the shutters were before shut, and said, "Master be'nt at home."

"It is not your master," said Orlando,
"that

“that I want, but your mistress.”—“Mistress be’nt well,” answered the girl, “and you cannot a see her.”

“Is she confined to her bed then?” enquired Orlando.

“Aye,” cried the girl, “confined enough for matter of that.”

“I should be very much obliged to you,” said Orlando, “if you could procure me only a few minutes conversation with her. I have some very particular business with her—it really is very material to me, and I will not be ungrateful if you will oblige me so far.” He then took out half a guinea, and said, “Perhaps this may be some small acknowledgment for your taking the trouble to oblige me.”

“Half a guinea!” cried the girl—“Ecollys I haven’t a no objection to that, sure enough; for ’tis a sight as we don’t often see at our house; but, Lord, I wish I dared! but, no, I mawn’t.”

“Why not?” said Orlando eagerly—“Pray, my dear, do, and I’ll make this half guinea a whole one!”

“Will you by George!” answered the peasant girl, who was quite a rustic from the fields—“what! gi me a whole entire guinea?”

“Yes,” said Orlando—“Here, this very guinea.”

“A bran new one, as I hope to live!” exclaimed the girl; “but I’ll tell you, master, if I does, and I should be found out, I shall lose my place.”

“I’ll get you a better place,” cried Orlando.

“He! he!” said the girl with an idiot laugh—“what would mother say?”

“Tell me, pray,” cried Orlando, “why you would lose your place for letting me see your mistress?”

“Why, Lord! don’t you know? Mistress is gived out to be mad, thof she’s no mad *nor* I be—and so when master e’ent at home, ye see, his sister keeps watch like over her, and never lets nobody see her; and when we be hired, we be told never to let no strangers in to see mistress upon no account whatever; for master and his sister, and his nasty old uncle as comes here sometimes,

times, they will all have it that mistress she's out of her mind, and that strangers makes her worse; and so she's locked up stairs, and have a been ever so long; though, poor old soul! she's tame enough for aught I ever see, and I'm sure repents her many a time as she have got into their clutches— But, hark! oh Gemini! our Tyger barks! I warrant you Miss Sukey is coming home.”

“Who is she? pray hasten to tell me, and take your money.”—“Oh, the Lord!” answered the girl, “Miss Sukey is our master's sister, a nasty cross old maid— She've been to Alresford this morning; or else, mun, I shouldn't have talked here so long—and now if she catches me——”

Orlando, into whose mind a thousand confused ideas now rushed, of the cause of Mrs. Roker's confinement, now dreaded lest the only opportunity he should have of hearing of or seeing Mrs. Lennard should escape him—“Can you not give your mistress a letter,” said he, “if you think she is in her senses, and bring me an answer this evening?”—“I'll try,” answered the girl;

“but you’ll give me the guinea then—and where shall I get the letter, and how will you get the answer?—Lord, Sir! it must be at night, after Miss Sukey is a-bed; and I must get out of our pantry-window, as I gets off the hooks every now and tan—for the bar on’t is loose, so I takes it out.”

“That will do,” said Orlando; “I’ll go write my letter;—where will you come for it?”

“Down to the hovel,” answered the girl, “there, close along the gert barn—I’ll slip down there when I goes a milking; and then if Madam will gi an answer, why you must stay there till ater our folks be all a-bed; but God a blefs you go now! for I fees Miss Sukey coming along.”

“Take your money,” said Orlando, giving her the guinea that had so tempted her, “and be punctual to the place—You mean that red-roof’d barn on the edge of the turnip field?”

“Yes, yes,” answered the girl—“Go, pray, now! and as you’ll run bump up against our Miss Sukey, tell her as how
you

you wanted master, and I wouldn't let you in."

Orlando, not without somewhat admiring the talent for intrigue, of which even this rude peasant girl had so considerable a share, walked back along the gravel walk; and at the wicket gate, which opened at the end of it to the road, he was accosted by a short, thick, red-faced woman, dressed in a yellow-green riding habit, faced with orange colour, and trimmed with silver, and a hat with green and black feathers in it. Her whole face was the colour of bad veal; the shade towards her nose rather more inveterate, and two goggle grey eyes, surmounted by two bushy carrotty eye brows, gave to her whole countenance so terrific an air, that Orlando absolutely started back when his eyes first distinguished it; while this amiable figure, stepping in the gate-way, and putting one hand on her hip, while the other held a cane, said in a loud and masculine voice to Orlando—"Who are you friend? and what is your business here?"

Orlando answered as he had been directed, that he wished to speak to Mr. Roker, but found he was not at home.

“ You may leave your business with me,” said Miss Sukey. Orlando answered, “ No; that there was no haste, and he would call again.” He then passed by this person, who gave him an idea of a fury modernized; and observed that she surveyed him with scrutinizing looks, and watched him till he was out of sight.

He hastened back to the inn he had left, and sat down to compose his letter to Mrs. Roker, in which he found much more difficulty than he had at first been aware of.

If she was confined by her husband under pretence of madness, as he thought was very probably the case, in order to prevent her testimony being received, or her discovering what it was supposed Roker had insisted on her continuing to conceal, she would probably still be deterred, by her fears and her shame, from declaring the truth; and if she was indeed mad, his letter to her would avail nothing, or perhaps be prejudicial,

prejudicial, by falling into the hands of her keepers. There was also a third possibility, which was, that she might still retain so much affection for her young husband, as to resent the interference of any one who supposed her ill used, even though they offered her the means of escaping from her tyrant. However, as no other chance seemed to offer, he determined to hazard this measure; and wording his letter as cautiously as he could, so as not to offend her, he offered, if she was in any degree unpleasantly situated, to send her the means of escaping, and entreated her to tell him where Monimia was, and all she knew of Mrs. Rayland's affairs at the time of her death; assuring her, in the most solemn manner, that if ever he recovered the estate, and by her means, he would not only enter into any agreement she should dictate to secure to her all she now possessed, but would, if she had given all up to her husband, settle upon her for life a sum that should make her more rich and independent than she had been before she gave her-

self to Mr. Roker ; and that she should inhabit her own apartments at the Hall, or any house on the estate which she might choose. He ended with some professions of personal regard to her, as well on account of their long acquaintance, as because she was the relation, and had been the benefactress of his beloved Monimia.

This letter being finished, he again set out on foot ; and as it was nearly dusk, concealed himself in the hovel which the servant girl had directed him to, where he had not waited many minutes before his emissary arrived, breathless with her fears of being discovered. He gave her the letter ; with which she hurried away, charging him to stay there till she returned to him, though it should be twelve o'clock at night. He promised her a farther reward if she succeeded in procuring him an answer ; and then, as the hovel was not in very good repair, and the cold extremely severe, he opened a door in it, made for the purpose of throwing straw out of the adjoining barn, and took shelter in the barn itself—
repeating

repeating those lines of Shakespeare where Cordelia describes her father; and, in recollecting all that had of late befallen him, all that he had lost, and the cruel uncertainty of his future destiny, as he applied to himself those descriptive lines,

To "hovel him with swine and rogues forlorn,
"In short and musty straw,"

he remembered the preceding exclamation,

"Alas! alas!

"'Tis wonder that thy life and wits at once
"Had not concluded all."

Thus, in meditations more moral than amusing, Orlando passed two or three tedious hours, sheltered by pease-halm and straw, which he gathered around him, and leaning against the boards of the barn, that he might not fail to hear when the ambassadress entered the out-house adjoining to it. About ten o'clock, as he guessed by the time he had been there, he heard a rustling among the wood and refuse of the hovel; and eagerly listening, in expectation of being called by his female Mercury, he heard a deep sigh, or rather groan, and a voice,

very unlike a female voice, lamenting in very bitter and somewhat coarse terms the cruelty of fate: the person soon after made his way through the same door by which Orlando had found entrance, and going farther into the barn, he heard this unwelcome guest make a noise which he knew was striking a light, and, putting a candle into a lantern, which he seemed to have hid, he set it down by him, and began to eat his miserable supper, consisting of scraps and dry crusts.—Orlando, peeping over his fortification, contemplated for a moment this forlorn outcast, whose head, shaded by a few white locks, was on the crown and temples quite bald, and otherwise resembled him who is described as the occasional visitor of the simple village priest:

“ The long remember’d beggar was his guest,

“ Whose beard descending, swept his aged breast.”

He resembled too the “ Broken Soldier” of the same admirable poem*; for he had lost one leg, and wore the remnant of a
coat

* Goldsmith’s Deserted Village.

coat that had once been scarlet. As the faint and dull light of a small candle through a thick horn lantern fell upon the furrowed countenance of this unhappy wanderer, Orlando contemplated it with pity, which for an instant detached him from the recollection of his own miseries; and he said to himself—"How unworthy, how unmanly are my complaints, when I compare my own situation with that of this poor old man, who, trembling on the verge of life, seems to have none of its common necessities; yet perhaps has been disabled from acquiring them by having lost his limb in the service of what is called his country, that is, in fighting the battles of its politicians; and having been deprived of his leg to preserve the balance of Europe, has not found in the usual asylum a place of rest, to make him such amends as can be made for such a misfortune! All the horrors of which he had been a witness in America now returned to his recollection; and the madness and folly of mankind, which occasioned those horrors, struck him more forcibly now

than when his spirits were heated by having been a party in them. In a few moments, however, he recollected, that though he wished to give some relief to the distressed veteran before him, it would not be at all convenient that he should hear the purport of his conversation with his emissary; but before he had time to consider how this might be prevented, he heard her enter the hovel; and, without farther consideration, his eagerness to know if she had a letter for him, induced him to rush out and meet her.

“Speak softly!” said he, as soon as he found it was really his messenger—“there is a beggar in the barn who will hear you; have you a letter for me?”

“Lord, yes!” answered the girl; “and such a twitter as I be in surely!”

“Give me the letter,” cried Orlando, trembling with haste; “and pray speak softly, lest the old man within should betray us!”

“’Tis only old Thomas,” answered the girl, “I dare say; for he lies every night
all

all winter long in our barns ; and I'll warrant you he'll tell no tales—for in the first place he knows how he'd get no more of our broken victuals if he did ; and in the next place he's as deaf as a post."

Orlando, whose impatience to read the letter was quite insupportable, then thought he might safely avail himself of the convenience of the old man's lantern to read it by. The girl assured him he might, and they entered the barn together for that purpose ; but there was no longer any light, and all was silent. The girl, however, at the earnest entreaties of Orlando, called aloud to her old acquaintance, and assuring him in a very elevated voice that it was only Pat Welling who wanted him to do a message for her at town the next day—a grumbling assent was soon after heard, and at her request he struck a light, relighted his candle, and brought it to the gentleman, who, eagerly tearing open the billet, read these lines :

“ Dear

“ Dear Sir,

“ I have received yours. I do not know what is become of the girl you enquire for, as she chose to quit the worthy person I put her to, after perversely and wickedly refusing a great and high match with Sir John Belgrave, Bart. the which I doubt not but she has reason to repent of before now ; though I do heartily beseech the Lord that she may not have taken to wicked courses, as there is great reason to fear ; but my conscience is clear thereon. I assure you, if I know where she is to be found, I will let you know, if you please to leave your direction with Martha Welling the bearer hereof :—at the same time, as to myself, thanking you for your kind offers, have no need to trouble you at present ; and know of no such thing as you are pleased to name, in regard to my late dear friend, deceased, Mrs. Rayland. Must beg to have no applications of like nature notwithstanding, because interference between married people is dangerous, generally making matters worse ; and if any little disagreements, which

which I wonder that you should have heard, have passed, it is no more than I have heard happens between the happiest couples; and I am sure Mr. Roker really has an affectionate regard for me, and I am willing to impute all that seems to the contrary to his family, who are very disagreeable people, and such as I confess I should be glad to be out of their way, if so be as it could be done without offending Mr. Roker, whom I must love, honour and obey till death, as in duty bound. Same time should be glad to do you any service not inconsistent with that; and, as I said before, would be glad of your direction, who am, dear Sir,

Your humble servant,

RACHEL ROKER.

Leffington House, near Alresford,
Hants, 10th January 1779.

P. S. Mrs. R. hopes Mr. S. will be cautious in mentioning having received these few lines, as it would be disagreeable to Mr. R——."

Orlando thought that in this letter he saw the struggle of its writer's mind, between something

something which she fancied was love, with shame and revenge. She had been too much flattered at first by the very unexpected acquisition of a young husband, to own now, without reluctance, that he was a savage who had robbed her under pretence of marrying her, and who now confined her, that she might not either discover his amours, of which he was said to have a great number, or be tempted through resentment of them, or her natural ill humour, to declare the conduct she had at his persuasion adopted; while her asking for Orlando's direction, and not seeming offended at his letter, persuaded him that she was pleased with the opportunity it gave her, to gratify the revenge which was always in her power, while she knew where to apply to one so much interested in the discovery she could make.

Orlando now determined, since the servant assured him there was no chance of his being admitted to see her, to write to her again, and await her answer at the inn the next day. He thought there was an opening

opening for suggesting to her much that he had before omitted, and he had at all events assured himself by the letter he was now in possession of, that she was not mad; a plea which he perfectly understood her husband meant to set up against the evidence she might otherwise be brought to give.

It was not difficult to engage the old beggar to become his messenger on this occasion, nor to prevail on Patty to give him the next letter she should get from her mistress, on condition however that her profits should not be lessened. He gave her another present; comforted the beggar with an earnest of his future generosity; and bidding him come by day-break the next morning for the billet he intended to send to Mrs. Roker, he took leave for that time of his two newly acquired acquaintance, whom he left much better content with the events of the day than he was—since, whatever reason he had to believe that he might recover his property, he felt with increase of anguish that he had no nearer prospect of recovering Monimia.

Determined.

Determined however to lose no opportunity of continuing his correspondence, he sat down the moment he came to the inn, and composed a very long letter, in which he enlarged on the ill treatment of her husband, whose gallantries he touched upon, affirming they were the more unpardonable when compared with her merit, and the obligations she had conferred upon him; he hinted at the consequence of her being compelled to appear, to answer upon oath to what she knew, and entreated her to save him the pain of calling into court as a party in secreting a will, a person for whom he had so much regard and respect; and he concluded with renewed offers of kindness in case of her coming voluntarily forward to do him justice.

His wandering messenger was the next morning punctual to his appointment; Orlando sent him away with his letter; and notwithstanding his age and his having but one leg, he returned again in about two hours—but, to the infinite mortification of Orlando, with a verbal message, which, though

though it had passed through the memory of Mrs. Patty, was very clearly delivered, and was to this effect—"That Madam had got the gentleman's letter; and being prevented from writing at this present time, begged him of all love to leave the country for fear of accidents, and he might depend upon hearing of her shortly." Not satisfied with this, Orlando now paid his bill at the inn, and went down to the barn, where he sent his vagabond ambassador to seek for the maid to whom he owed the little progress he had made. With some difficulty he found her, and prevailed upon her to revisit the place of rendezvous, where she informed Orlando that Miss Sukey had been watching about old mistress more than ordinary, and that the poor woman was frightened out of her wits lest Orlando's having written to her should be known; wherefore, as Miss Sukey seemed to suspect something, old Madam did entreat the 'squire not to stay thereabouts; because she should in that case be more strictly confined, and never should be able to write to him,

him, which she now promised to do, if he would only leave the country. As this was all the intelligence the disappointed Orlando could now procure, he was compelled to obey this unwelcome injunction, lest he should lose all future advantage; and engaging by renewed presents the fidelity and future assistance of his two emissaries, he remounted his horse, and took the road to Winchester. He now fell again into melancholy reflections: every hour added to his despair about Monimia, and without her, life was not in his opinion worth having. From these thoughts a natural transition led him to consider the wonderful tenacity with which those beings clung to life, whose existence seemed to him only a series of the most terrible sufferings:—beings, who exposed to all the miseries of pain, poverty, sickness and famine; to pain unrelieved, and the feebleness of age unassisted, yet still were anxious to live; and could never, as he at this moment found himself disposed to do—

“ Reason thus with life:

“ If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing

“ Which none but fools would keep.”

Yet

Yet he had seen many die in the field, who neither seemed to fear nor feel the stroke of that destiny which miserable age still recoiled and crept away from. The poor maimed wanderer, whose daily wants he had for a little while suspended, was an instance that the fear of death makes the most wretched life supportable. In pursuing this train of thought he arrived at Winchester, where he intended to remain till the next day.

C H A P. IX.

EARLY on the following morning Orlando left Winchester; but it was between three and four o'clock before he arrived at that part of the New Forest which is near Christchurch, and the frost, now set in with great severity, had made the roads very difficult for an horse, especially the way which he was directed to pursue, through the forest to the residence of Mrs. Fleming.—It was a deep, hollow road, only wide enough for waggons, and was in some places shaded by hazle and other brushwood; in others, by old beech and oaks, whose roots wreathed about the bank, intermingled with ivy, holly, and evergreen fern, almost the only plants that appeared in a state of vegetation, unless the pale and fallow mistletoe, which here and there partially

tially tinted with faint green the old trees above them.

Orlando, as slowly he picked his way over the rugged road, whose poached surface, now hardened by the frost, hardly allowed a footing to his horse, recollected the hunting parties in the snow, which had amused him in America; but the scene on each side of him was very different. The scanty appearance of foliage was quite unlike an American forest, where, in only a few hours after the severest weather, which had buried the whole country in snow, burst into bloom, and presented, beneath the tulip tree and the magnolia, a more brilliant variety of flowers than art can collect in the most cultivated European garden. Orlando, however, loved England, and had early imbibed that fortunate prejudice, that it is in England only an Englishman can be happy; yet he now thought, that were he once sure Monimia was lost to him (and his fears of finding it so became every hour more alarming), he should be more wretched in his own country than in any

other, since every object would remind him of their cruel separation. In this disposition, trying to accustom himself to reflect on a circumstance which now distracted him, he made a sort of determination, that if all his endeavours to find Monimia were baffled, as they had hitherto been, he would remain only to see the termination of the suit relative to the Rayland estate, in hopes of leaving his mother, brother, and sisters, in a more fortunate situation ; and reserving for himself only as much as would support him in the itinerant life he should embrace, to wander alone over Europe and America. While he pursued these contemplations, the way became almost impassable ; for a small current of water filtering through the rocky bank, had spread itself over the road, and formed a sheet of ice, on which his horse was every moment in danger of falling, though the precaution had been taken to turn the shoes.—He had before dismounted, and now contrived to get his horse up the least steep part of the hollow, and then, still leading it by the bridle, he followed

followed the foot-path which led along its edge.

The tufts of trees and thick underwood now became more frequent; and though it was a fine, clear evening, the winter sun, almost sunk beneath the horizon, lent only pale and cold rays among the intervening wood.—Orlando supposing, that if he were benighted, he should no longer distinguish the path, quickened his pace; and the path he followed, diverging a little from the horse road, brought him to a place where the inequalities of the ground, half shaded with brush-wood, shewed that beneath it were concealed more considerable fragments of ruins, than what appeared above among the trees, from whence the masses of stone were so mantled with ivy, they could hardly be distinguished. The path which Orlando continued to pursue, wound among them, and led under broken arches and buttresses, which had resisted the attacks of time and of violence, towards an old gateway, whose form was yet entire.

Every thing was perfectly still around;

even the robin, solitary songster of the frozen woods, had ceased his faint vespers to the setting sun, and hardly a breath of air agitated the leafless branches. This dead silence was interrupted by no sound, but the slow progress of his horse, as the hollow ground beneath his feet sounded as if he trod on vaults. There was in the scene, and in this dull pause of nature, a solemnity not unpleasing to Orlando, in his present disposition of mind.—Certain that the path he was pursuing must lead to some village or farm-house, and little apprehensive of the inconvenience that could in this country befall a man accustomed to traverse the deserts of America, he stopped a moment or two indulging a mournful reverie, before he began to remove, in order to make a passage for his horse, a kind of bar, or rather broken gate, which, with thorns, and a faggot or two piled under it, passed from one side to the other of the broken arch, and made here, with an hedge that was carried among the ruins, a division
of

of the forest, or perhaps one of its boundaries.

As he meditated here, he heard, not far from him, human voices, which seemed to be those of children; and, leaning over the bar, to see if he could discern the persons who spoke, he observed a female figure seated on a mass of fallen stone, and apparently waiting for two girls, one about nine, the other seven years old, who were prattling together, as they peeped about in search of something among the fern-stacks and low tufts of broom that were near. The woman, whose face was turned towards them, seemed lost in thought—Her straw bonnet was tied down close to her face, and she was wrapped in a long black cloak; a little basket stood by her, and her appearance, as well as that of the children, was such as seemed to denote, that though they were not of the peasantry of the country, they were as little to be ranked among its most affluent inhabitants.

Orlando, apprehending that the approach of a stranger, in such a place, and at such

a time, might alarm so defenceless a party, proceeded with as little noise as possible to unfasten the bar ; but, on his approach, the young woman arose, and in apparent hurry said, “ Come, my loves ! you forget how late it is, and that your mamma will expect us.”

The voice riveted Orlando to the spot for a moment ; he then involuntarily stepped forward, and saw——Monimia !

He repeated her name wildly, as if he doubted whether he possessed his senses ; and as he clasped her to his bosom, and found it was indeed his own Monimia, she was unable, from excess of pleasure and surprise, to answer the incoherent questions he asked her. Half frantic with joy as he was, he soon perceived that the suddenness of this meeting had almost overwhelmed her. Silent, breathless, and trembling, she leaned on his arm, without having the power to tell him, what he at length understood from the two little girls, who had been at first frightened, and then amazed at the scene——That Monimia, or, as they called her, Miss Morysine,

Moryfine, was now, and had been for some time, under the protection of that very Mrs. Fleming, the widow of his gallant friend, whom he was now going to visit. Neither of them knew how they arrived at her humble retirement, a cottage among the woods, fitted up and enlarged with two additional rooms by a sea officer, the distant relation of Fleming, who was now in America, and who had lent this pleasant, solitary house as a shelter to his widow and her children. —Nor was it for some time possible for Orlando properly to explain to Mrs. Fleming who he was, or how different those motives were, which induced him now to see her, from any hope of finding, in the pious office of visiting the family of his deceased friend, the sole happiness of his life.

When at length, amid this disjointed and broken conversation, Mrs. Fleming was brought not only to recollect the young man, who, on her husband's embarkation for America, had taken so much pains to be useful to him, in the trying moment of separation from his family, but

to acknowledge him who had actually received his last breath, and now brought her his dying blessing; her own afflictions, to a lively sense of which Orlando's account of Fleming's death had awakened her, prevented her, for some time, from attending to the unexpected happiness of her young friends. Unable to hear, with composure, the account which Orlando held himself bound to give, yet solicitously asking questions, the answers to which made her heart bleed afresh, Mrs. Fleming at length requested leave to retire; and taking her children with her, Monimia was left at liberty to give to the impatient Orlando the account he so eagerly desired to hear, of what had happened to her since the date of the only letter he had ever received from her, which was written not more than six weeks after his departure.— She doubted of her own strength to give, and of his patience to hear this recital: but he appeared so very solicitous, that she determined to attempt it; and while his eyes were ardently fixed on her face, and
watched

watched every turn of her expressive features, which, though she was pale and thin, Orlando thought more lovely than ever, she thus in a soft and low voice began :

“ As well as I can recollect, Orlando, I related to you, in my long letter, the troublesome and impertinent intrusion of Sir John Belgrave ; and Selina has told you since, that, as he carried his persecutions so far as to come into the house, and endeavour to force his way into my room, I was under the necessity of telling my aunt how he found admittance, and of betraying a secret I had so many reasons to wish might never have been discovered.— Alas ! Orlando, how much did I not suffer from the bitterness of her reproaches ! sufferings which were sharpened by my being compelled to acknowledge, that I had in some measure deserved them, by having carried on a correspondence contrary to what I knew was my duty.—Indeed the punishment I now underwent, from day to day, seemed sometimes much heavier than the crime deserved ; especially when my

K 5

aunt,

aunt, to whom my moving was inconvenient (though certainly, in that great house, there was room enough for me without interfering with her), began to make the discovery, I had thus been compelled to make, an everlasting theme of reproach to me; to say, that such a cunning, intriguing creature was not fit to be in any house; and to threaten me continually to ruin you, Orlando, with Mrs. Rayland, by blowing us up, as she was pleased to term it. All this I bore, however hard it was to bear, with silence, and, I hope, with patience, flattering myself, my dear friend! that the anger we had perhaps mutually deserved would thus be exhausted on me, and that I alone should be the victim, if a victim were required: yet, when my cruel aunt, unmoved by my resignation and submission, seemed so desirous of getting rid of me, that I believe she would have been glad to have sold me to Sir John Belgrave; and when she insisted upon my consenting to marry him, though I do not believe he ever intended it, and only made that a pretence

for getting me into his power; I own there were moments, when, in absolute despair, I thought it would hardly have been criminal to have put an end to a life so very insupportable; nor could I, I think, have lived, if some of those books you taught me to read, and to understand, had not instructed me, that it was impious to murmur, or resist the dispensations of Providence, who knew best what we were able to bear.—Perhaps too, the hope, the dear hope of living in your affection, and of being beloved by you, however hard my lot, lent me a portion of fortitude, for which, surely, nobody ever had more occasion: for in proportion, Orlando, as Mrs Lenard became attached to that odious Roker, the little affection she had ever shewn me declined, and was changed into dislike and hatred.—She was sometimes so much off her guard, as to suffer her excessive and ridiculous attachment to him to diminish her attention to her mistress, and on these occasions, I used to supply her place;—yet then, if Mrs. Rayland seemed pleased

with my attendance, she would quarrel with me for attending, and say, that she supposed the next thing such an artful slut would think of, would be to supplant her with her lady ; and then again she would threaten to blow you up.—Indeed, I believe, that no situation could be less enviable than that of my poor aunt was at this time ; for though certainly, at her age, one would have thought she might have been exempt from suffering much pain from love, she did really appear so tormented by her excessive passion for Roker, and her fears of losing him, that she was an object of pity.—If I was below with her lady, while she was with him, then she was afraid of my getting into favour with Mrs. Rayland ; and if I was above, and he was in the house, she was in terror lest so intriguing a creature should carry off her lover. When I so firmly resisted all the insidious offers of Sir John Belgrave, she doubted whether this delectable Mr. Roker was not the cause of it ; and even when he happened to come into the room where I was,

though

though she was present, she turned pale with jealousy, and, I suppose, tormented the man, who, though one of the most horrid-tempered monsters existing, commanded himself so much, that he bore it all with an apparent increase of affection; and pretending, in his turn, to be jealous, said, that he could not bear to divide her affections even with me.

“ I saw that they were determined to get rid of me, but could not immediately settle how; for though Roker, from time to time, started some plan for that purpose, the lady, always suspecting that he liked me, was fearful lest he should only divide me from her, to secure me to himself.”

“ Execrable villain !” cried Orlando, starting up—“ he dared not think of it.”

“ Be patient, Orlando, or I shall never have courage to go on.—I know not what was in his imagination, though certainly he took every opportunity of making very improper speeches to me; but detestable as I believe his morals are, his avarice is greater than any other of his odious passions;

sions ; and this he found he might gratify, when the success of any other was uncertain ; and therefore he affected to be as anxious as my aunt was, to remove me from Rayland Hall.

“ Ah, my dear friend, what an autumn was that I passed there ! yet my fate, dreary as it appeared to me, was not then at the worst ; I had still some sweeteners of my melancholy existence ; for I sometimes met Selina, and wept with her ; and sometimes, when I was convinced Sir John Belgrave no longer lingered about the park (where for many weeks I could never go without being insulted by him), I used to get out alone ; and stealing away to some of those places we used to visit together, I would lean my head against a tree, or hide my face with my hands, and listening, with closed eyes, to the sounds that were then familiar to us, used to fancy I heard your footsteps among the leaves, or your voice whispering in the air that sighed among the trees. Once, at the old seat on the Hurst hill, I saw your name, so
lately

lately cut as the very day before you went away ; and could I have wept on the letters, I believe the tears I afterwards shed there would have worn them out.—I took a fancy to the place, which nobody else ever thought of frequenting ; and often, as autumn came on, and the days grew short, I staid till I was frightened at being out so late, and have run home terrified at every noise.—If a pheasant flew up, or an hare darted across the path, they threw me into such terrors, that I could hardly reach the house. On these occasions, "all was well if my aunt's Adonis was with her ; but if it happened that he was out when I was, she took it into her head that we were together, or that we might meet, and then she was, I really believe, out of her senses. Very unluckily for me, I came in one evening later than usual, breatheless with my foolish fears, and found my poor aunt in terrible agitation, because Mr. Roker had promised her to be in at tea-time, and he was not yet arrived.—She questioned me sharply where I had been ; and I said in the mill

wood

wood, which was the truth ; for I had that evening met Selina. She asked me, with still more asperity, if I had not met somebody? The consciousness that I had, made me blush; I believe, very deeply, and I faltered as I said No!—In a moment Roker came in, half drunk, and the poor old lady flew at him like a turkey cock, and asked him, which way he came? As he was less upon his good-behaviour than usual, he said, “ Came! why I came by the mill; which way should I come from the place where I have been?”—This confirmed, she thrust me out of the room, and ordering me to go up stairs to bed that moment, she threw herself into a fit, as Rebecca told me afterwards. I do not know how Mr. Roker contrived to appease her—she was reconciled to him the next day; but I was the victim, and was, after that time, forbidden to go out without her leave. This, hard as it was, I could still have borne, because it was just at that time Mrs. Rayland seemed to grow particularly kind to me; and to have even a degree

degree of pleasure in talking to me of you. It was now time to expect to hear from you, and I observed her anxiety every day increase.—She often sighed when she spoke of you; and once said, that her house seemed to have lost all its cheerfulness since you had left it;—and often she would look at an old enameled picture of Sir Orlando, her grandfather, and, comparing his features with yours, admire the likeness—then, again, regret your absence, and sink into low spirits. Indeed her health seemed every day to decline: and I sometimes thought she was discontented with Mrs. Lennard, though from long habit she was more entirely governed by her than ever. Pattenfon's having dealt so largely in smuggled goods, and having even made her house a receptacle for them, was discovered by his not being able or willing to bribe a new officer who succeeded some of his old friends, and who, upon that Jonas Wilkins's turning informer, came one night to the Hall, and made a seizure of about two hundred pounds worth of spirits,

spirits, tea, and lace ; a thing that offended Mrs. Rayland extremely, as she thought it derogatory to her dignity, and a profanation of her cellars, which, as we know (and Monimia faintly smiled, are immediately adjoining to the family vault of the Raylands. This, and other things, particularly some of his amours, which now came to her knowledge, had occasioned her to dismiss Pattenfon, and to think higher of you for the pains Pattenfon had taken to prejudice her against you : but the dismissal, and soon afterwards the death of Pattenfon, and the disgrace of the old coachman, who was a party concerned in this contraband business (and who had besides displeased Mrs. Rayland by setting up a whisky, and dressing his daughters in the most expensive fashion), threw the old lady more than ever into the power of my aunt ; though, how she escaped being included in the charge, I never could imagine : I know she was acquainted with, and I believe she was concerned in the clandestine trade which had for so many years been
been

been carried on at Rayland Hall; but probably Pattenfon dared not impeach her, lest, though he might ruin her, he should at the same time provoke her to discover some things in his life which would have effectually cut him off from that portion of favour he still possessed with Mrs. Rayland; who, angry as she was with him, stocked the farm he retired to, furnished his house, and continued to him almost every advantage he enjoyed at the Hall, except the opportunity of making it a receptacle for smuggled goods.

“ However that was, my aunt certainly continued to have great influence over Mrs. Rayland, though I often thought it was more through habit than love; and I am persuaded that, if she had not always guarded against the inclination which Mrs. Rayland at times betrayed to take your mother and sisters into favour, they would by degrees have acquired that ascendancy over her from their own merit, which Mrs. Lennard had now only from habit—But my aunt was too cunning to give them an opportunity :

opportunity; and that, I believe, was partly the reason why she was so afraid of my being taken into Mrs. Rayland's kindness, since nothing was more natural than for me to speak in their favour. She need not, however, have dreaded this; for, however willing or anxious I might be, my awe of Mrs. Rayland was too great for me to aspire to the character of her confident: and she looked upon me as a mere child.—Probably our ages differed too much to allow any great sympathy between us—and I could give her no other pleasure than by attending to the stories she used to love to repeat, of the days of her youth.—But Mrs. Lennard, though by no means desirous of being herself the auditor, and never easy but when she could remain unmolested with her dear Mr. Roker, was still jealous lest her lady should feel any degree of kindness for me; and, I believe, by imputing to me faults which Mrs. Rayland took her word for, contrived gradually to get her consent to my going apprentice, under the idea of my being enabled to get my

my own bread honestly in business; while she obviated the inconvenience of my departure by introducing a new servant to be about her lady, who was entirely devoted to her own interest—and kept away the old cook as much as she could, whom Mrs. Rayland never would part with, but whom my aunt feared and disliked, because she was an honest blunt creature, who never feared speaking her mind, and was particularly a friend of yours, as you may I am sure recollect. Latterly she became more than usually disagreeable to my aunt and Roker, because she used to rejoice in the thought that her dear young captain would one day or other be master of the Hall; and when Lennard angrily asked her how she dared talk of any one's being master of the Hall while her lady lived? she replied, that she dared talk so, because Madam herself had told her so."

"And where, my Monimia, is this good old friend of mine now?" said Orlando—"Her evidence may be of great importance to us."—"Alas!" replied she,

"I know

“ I know not : I only heard from your sister, that Dr. Hollybourn, who acted as executor to the only will that was produced, immediately discharged all the servants, giving to each of them a present above the two years wages which Mrs. Rayland had in that will given to each of the inferior ones ; and, with many good words, got as many as he could of them into other services, at a distance from the country—But I recollect that the cook had relations in the neighbourhood of the Hall, of whom, I dare say, intelligence about her may be procured.

“ Ah, dear Orlando ! if the account I have already given you of my unhappy life after your departure has affected you, what will you feel when I relate what passed afterwards, to which all my preceding sufferings were nothing !—It is true that, as I lay listening of a night to the howling of the wind in the great melancholy room at the end of the north gallery, where I was locked up every night, I have frequently started at the visions my fancy raised ;
and

and as the dark green damask hangings swelled with the air behind them, I have been so much terrified as to be unable to move or to summon to my recollection all the arguments you were wont to use against superstitious fear—Then too I have been glad even to hear the rats as they raced round the skirting boards, because it convinced me there were some living creatures near me, and helped me to account for the strange noises I sometimes heard. As winter came on, my misery in this great room became worse and worse; and such was my terror, that I could hardly ever sleep—I once contrived to get candles, and set up a light in my room; but this only served to shew me the great grim picture over the chimney, of one of the Rayland family in armour, with a sword in his hand: and I was indeed, besides this, effectually cured of wishing for a light on the second night I tried it—for a party of my friendly rats, perceiving the candle, which was to them a delicate treat, took it very composedly out of the socket, and
began

began to eat the end of it which was not alight.—This compelled me to leave my bed to put it out, and them to flight ; while the terror I suffered was only increased by this attempt to mitigate it.—Good God ! how weak I was to add imaginary horrors to the real calamities of my situation ; rather than try to acquire strength of mind to bear the evils from which I could not escape !

“ It was at this time that Sir John Belgrave, who, on finding his insulting proposals treated with the contempt they deserved, had left the country for some time, returned thither ; and as Jacob, his confidant, could no longer find means to put his letters in my way, or to harass and alarm me by coming to the door of the turret, he changed his plan, and pretended that his views were highly honourable. In letter to my aunt he entreated her interest with me, and that she would prevail upon me to see him : and then it was, Orlando, that my sufferings were almost beyond the power of endurance.”

"What!" exclaimed Orlando, "was the infamous woman base enough then to betray you to this villain?"

"Have patience, I entreat you, Orlando!—She betrayed me then, so far as to insist upon my seeing Sir John, and hearing what he had to say."

"Eternal curses blast them both!" exclaimed Orlando:—"but I terrify you, my angel!"

"You do, indeed," answered Monimia; "and I shall never, Orlando, conclude my mournful narrative, if you will not be more calm."

"I will," replied he; "at least I will try at it—Pray go on."

"I resisted this proposal of seeing Sir John Belgrave for many days; till my aunt, enraged at what she called my stupid idiotism, declared to me that, if I persisted to behave so senselessly, she would relate to Mrs. Rayland all my clandestine meetings with you, and then turn me out of the house to take my own courses.—I would willingly have left the house, and,

rather than have undergone one day longer the misery I hourly experienced, I would have begged my way to you in America (Orlando sighed and shuddered); but when my cruel aunt threatened to take such means as I knew would ruin you, and blast all those hopes on which alone I lived, of seeing you return to happiness and independence, I own I could not bear to hazard it, and at length consented to see this detested suitor—not without some hope that my peremptory refusal repeated (for I had already given it him in writing) might put an end to all his hateful pretensions. A day therefore was fixed: but Sir John, either repenting that he had gone so far, or from some caprice, wrote to my aunt to say he was that day sent for express to London, to attend a dying relation, from whom he expected a great acquisition of fortune. This might be true—I cared not whether it was or no, but blessed the fortunate relief from persecution. In the interim your father, who was taken ill some time before, died.—Oh! how much did

did I see Selina suffer during his illness—how much did I suffer myself! and all was aggravated to an indescribable degree of wretchedness, by our believing that you, Orlando, were lost in your passage to America!—If I thought my former condition insupportable, what was the increase of my sorrows now, when torn from the last consolation I had left, that of weeping sometimes with Selina!—My aunt, almost as soon as Sir John Belgrave had left the country, informed me that she had found a person at Winchester willing to take me for a small premium, and that I was to go the following Thursday.—I never knew how all this was settled; but very, very certain it is, that it was arranged between her, her lover Mr. Roker, and Sir John Belgrave. She was impatient to have me gone; and sent the old cook, to take care of me, as far as Havant, where Mrs. Newill, to whom I was consigned, met me, and conducted me to a little miserable apartment, which, with a small bow-windowed shop, she inhabited at Winchester, and where she

was to teach me a business which I soon found she did not know herself.

“ Mrs. Newill was said to have been well brought up; but, if she were, her having long associated with people in very inferior life had considerably obliterated the traces of a good education; and the inconvenient circumstances to which she had been exposed, in consequence of having had a brutal and extravagant husband, seemed at once to have soured her temper, and relaxed her morals.—She had some remains of beauty, and was fonder of talking of its former power than I thought redounded much to her honour.—Her husband had possessed a place in the dock-yard at Portsmouth, from whence he had been dismissed for some heavy offences, and lived now upon the wide world; while his wife was, by the assistance of her friends, trying to get into business to support herself; their only son, a young man of twenty, was in the navy.—The greatest personal hardship I endured on this my change of

abode, was sleeping in the same bed with Mrs. Newill, which I did for the first week : —but, fortunately for me, though it was probably much otherwise to her, her husband, believing she had money, for he had heard of her having taken an apprentice, came suddenly to her house, or rather lodging, and I was dismissed to a little closet in a garret with a truckle bed : but it was paradise compared with my share of Mrs. Newill's ; for now I could weep at liberty, and pray for you !

“ The arrival of such a man as Mr. Newill did not much contribute to the prosperity of his wife's business—Those who, from their former knowledge of her, were willing to promote her welfare, grew cold when they found their bounty served only to support her husband in drunkenness, and her distress became very great, of which I was a sharer ; but I endeavoured to do all I could to continue her business, which was now almost entirely neglected.

“ This went on for six weeks, when a regiment came thither to assist in guarding

the prisoners at the castle; and Sir John Belgrave suddenly made his appearance, protesting to me, that he knew nothing of my being there, and only came down on a visit to some of his friends in the newly arrived corps.

“ I did not believe this, and found every day more cause to suppose that Mrs. New-ill’s necessities had driven her to the inhuman expedient of betraying me to him. Though I had often ridiculed the stories in novels where young women are forcibly carried away, I saw great reason to believe some such adventure might happen to me, for I was totally unprotected, and I believe, absolutely sold.”

Orlando, starting up, traversed the room; nor could, for some time, the soothing voice of Monimia restore him to sufficient composure to attend to her narrative.

At length his anxiety to know what he yet trembled to hear obliged him to reassume his seat, and she thus proceeded :

“ Surely, Orlando, you do not suppose that any distress, any misery, could have induced

induced me to listen to Sir John Belgrave, though, instead of the advantages he affected to offer me, he could have laid empires at my feet.—It is true that I now suffered every species of mortification, and even much personal inconvenience; but my heart felt only the horrid tidings I received from Selina. Mrs. Rayland's death, and the total disappointment of your family's hopes, were very melancholy; but when Perseus arrived, and your death, Orlando, was confirmed by the testimony of a man who had seen you fall, my wretchedness so much exceeded all that I believed it possible to bear, that I became stupified and insensible to every thing else, and walked about without hearing or seeing the objects around me. I never slept, but with the aid of laudanum—I could not shed a tear, and my heart seemed to be turned to marble. I had nobody to hear my complaints, and therefore I did not complain; and the only circumstance that roused me from this state of mind, was the renewal of Sir John Belgrave's visits, who, after an absence of se-

ven or eight days, returned with new proposals, and dared to triumph in the knowledge that his rival, as he insolently called you, was no longer in his way.

“ It was now, Orlando, that a new method was pursued. He contrived, what was not indeed very difficult, to gain over Mr. Newill to his interest.—I was now treated with great respect—A room was hired for me in the same house, and Mrs. Newill offered me credit for any clothes I chose to have. I, who was hardly conscious of my existence, who mechanically performed the business of the day, and cared not whether I ever again saw the light of the sun, refused her offers, and desired nothing but that I might be protected from the affront of Sir John Belgrave’s visits. If I sat at work in the shop, he was there :—if I quit-
ted it, he came into the work-room, under pretence of speaking to Mr. Newill. I found that Newill was a wretch who would have sacrificed a daughter of his own for a few guineas, with which to purchase his favourite indulgences; and Sir John Belgrave

grave scrupled not to say, that, since I had refused his honourable offers, he held it no dishonour to compel me, by any means, to exchange my present wretched dependence, for affluence and prosperity—that I could not now have the pretence of constancy to you, and that his excessive love for me would in time induce me to return it.—Such were the terms in which he pressed his suit, giving me at the same time to understand that I was in his power.

“ But, liberal as I have reason to believe he was to Mr. Newill, his debts were too numerous and extensive to be so settled; and, in consequence of one of these, to the amount of five hundred pounds, he was arrested in London, and sent for his wife to attend him in the King’s Bench.

“ This the unhappy woman prepared to do in two or three days; and, in that time, made over the little stock for sale to one of her friends, who had advanced money for her.—But what was to become of me?—As she had no longer a business, she could have no occasion for an apprentice, and I

could be only a burthen to her ; but I soon found that it was her husband's directions that she should take me with her, and I determined at all events not to go.

“ I now again wrote to my cruel aunt, who though she almost immediately after Mrs. Rayland's death settled within twelve miles of the town whither she had sent me, had never taken any other notice of me than to send me a small supply of clothes and two guineas, together with a verbal message, that the reason she had not answered any of my former, nor should answer any of my future letters, was, that she would not encourage in her perverseness a person so blind to her own interest, and that, till I knew how to behave to Sir John Belgrave, I should find no friend in her. It was in vain I wrote to her, urging every plea that I thought might move her, and soliciting her pity and protection, as the only friend I had in the world. She either hardened her heart against me, or perhaps never got my letters. The business that detained Mrs. Newill at Winchester, could
not

not be settled so expeditiously as she expected. In the mean time, what a situation was mine ! I had nothing to hope but death, and death only could deliver me from the fear of evils infinitely more insupportable. Orlando, how earnestly did I pray to join you in heaven ! how often did I invoke you to hear me ! and casting towards the west my swollen eyes (for I was now able to weep in repeating your name), how often have I addressed the setting sun, which, as it sunk away from our horizon, might illuminate, I thought, that spot in the wilderness of America where all my happiness was buried !”

Orlando kissed away the tears that now fell on her lovely cheeks, and mingled his own with them ; when Monimia after a little time recovered her voice, and went on—“ It was to indulge such meditations, the only comfort I had, that I stole out whenever I could be secure that my persecutor was with his military friends ; and as I dared not go far, the church-yard on that side of the cathedral where the soldiers did not parade, or sometimes the cathedral

itself, were the only places where there was a chance of my not being molested; and there, if I could ever procure quiet for a quarter of an hour, the daws that inhabited the old buildings, and who were now making their nests (for it was early spring), recalled to my mind, by the similarity of sounds, Rayland-Hall; and when I compared my present condition with even the most comfortless hours I passed there, I reproached myself for my former discontent, and envied all who were at peace beneath the monumental stones around me.—Later than usual one evening I returned from this mournful walk, and, making my way with some difficulty through the crowds who were assembling in the streets to celebrate some victory or advantage in America (and at the very name of America my heart sickened within me), I was overtaken near the door of Mrs. Newill's lodging, by the person whom I most dreaded to meet—Sir John Belgrave, evidently in a state of intoxication, with three officers in the same situation, who insisted on seeing me home. I was within a few yards of the
door,

door, and hastened on to disengage myself from them ; but they followed me, or rather Sir John Belgrave with one arm round my waist hurried me on, talking to me in a style of which I was too much terrified to know more than that it was most insulting and improper.

“In this way, however, while I remonstrated, and trembled, and entreated in vain, I was forced into a little room behind the shop, where Mrs. Newill usually sat, where, instead of her, there sat by the side of a small fire (for the weather was yet cold) a young man in the naval uniform, who starting up on the abrupt entrance of such a party, stood amazed a moment at the language of Sir John Belgrave and his friends, and then, fiercely demanding what business they had in that house, ordered them to leave it ; and, taking my hand, he said—“ I am ashamed, gentlemen, of your treatment of this young woman—Don’t be alarmed, miss—I will protect you.”

“I most willingly put myself into the protection he offered, when Belgrave, enraged at being thus addressed by a person whom
he

he considered as so much his inferior, uttered a great oath, and said—"And, pray, fellow, who are you?—and what the devil have you to do with this girl?"—"Master of my mother's apartment," replied the young sailor, who I now understood was Mrs. Newill's son—"and an Englishman! As the first, I shall prevent any ruffian's insulting a woman here; as the second, I shall defend her from insult any where."—"You be d—d!" cried Belgrave; "you impudent puppy, do you think that black stock makes you on a footing with a gentleman?" Belgrave's companions had by this time wisely retired; for, as I was not *their* pursuit, they saw no occasion to incur the danger of a quarrel in it. The only answer the stranger gave to this additional insolence of Belgrave was a violent blow, which drove the aggressor against the side of the wainscot, that in so narrow a room prevented his falling; and then young Newill, seizing him by the collar, with a sudden jerk threw him out of the room, and shut the door. The noise all this made brought Mrs. New-

ill down stairs, who demanded of her son what was the matter? He answered, that some brutal officers, very drunk, had insulted a young lady who had taken shelter in that room, and whom he had rescued from their impertinence by turning them out of it. His mother, in additional consternation, then turned to me, "What!" said she, "it was you, miss, was it? And I suppose the gentleman was Sir John Belgrave—Fine doings! And so, William, this is the way you affront my friends?"

"I care not whose friends I affront," replied he: "if they behave like brutes to a woman, I would affront them if they were emperors." His mother, who I am afraid had been solacing herself above stairs with some of those remedies to which she often applied for consolation, now began to cry and lament herself; and, in her pathetic complaints, bemoaned her ill luck that had given her an apprentice that, so far from being an assistant, was only a trouble to her, and did nothing but offend her customers. Young Newill then, for the first time,

time, understood that I was this apprentice; and as I sat weeping in a corner, I saw he pitied me—"Come, come, Madam," said he to his mother, "no more of this, if you please—nobody has offended your customers; but, on the contrary, your customers, as you call them, have offended me; let us look a little after this good friend of yours, perhaps he may have some farther commands for me—it is unhandsome to sink such a fine fair-weather jack, without lending a hand to heave him up." He then, in despite of his mother's entreaties, opened the door; but no Sir John Belgrave appeared, and the sailor observed that he had set all his canvas and scudded off. "So now, dear mother," said he, "pr'ythee let's have no more foul weather; but let us sit down to supper, for I'm sure this young woman must be glad of something after her fright—poor little soul, how she trembles still!—and you should remember that I have rode from Portsmouth since dinner, and a seaman just come from a two months cruise must eat." Mrs. Newill still

still however appearing to think more of Sir John Belgrave than her son, he became presently impatient; and going out to a neighbouring inn, he ordered a supper and some kind of wine or punch; which being soon brought, Mrs. Newill consented to partake of it, though she still behaved to me with such rude reserve, that I would immediately have retired, if young Newill had not insisted on my sitting down to supper with them, and I was too much obliged to him to refuse."

"You were certainly obliged to him," said Orlando in a hurried voice; "but after such a scene I wonder you were able to remain with these people—What sort of a man is young Newill? Is he a well-looking man?"

"Yes," replied Monimia, "rather so; but I hardly knew then how he looked—and in the scene I have described, I rather recollected it afterwards, than attended to it at the time."

"Pardon me," interrupted Orlando, with quickness—"you must have attended

to

to it at the time, or you could not have recollected it afterwards. Have you often seen this Mr. Newill since? What is become of him now?"

"He is gone to sea," replied Monimia.

"You have not then seen him since?"

"Yes, certainly I have—I saw him the next day,"

"Where?" cried Orlando, impatiently.

"I was obliged," answered Monimia, "because Mrs. Newill was now going immediately to join her imprisoned husband, to be up early to pack up some things in the shop for the person who had bought them; and while I did it, all my sorrows pressing with insupportable weight on my mind, and above all, your loss, Orlando—I wept as I proceeded in my task of tying up band-boxes and parcels, and yet I hardly knew I wept; when young Newill entered the place where I was, and offered to help me—" "Good God!" said he, "you are crying!" He took my hand, it was wet with tears."

"And he kissed them off," cried Orlando, again wildly starting from his chair,

"I

“I know he did—yes! this stranger, infinitely more dangerous than Belgrave”

“Oh! dear Orlando,” said Monimia, with a deep and tremulous sigh, “what is it you suspect me of? Do not, I beseech you, destroy me as soon as we have met, by suspicions, which indeed, if you will hear me with patience”

“Go on, Monimia,” said he, recovering himself—“go on, and I will be as patient as I can—but this Newill”—“Always,” said Monimia, “behaved to me like the tenderest brother, and it is to him alone I am indebted for the safety and protection I have found. Yet it is true, Orlando, and I will not attempt to conceal it from you, that young Newill in this first interview professed himself my lover; but when I assured him that all my affections were buried with you, that it was out of my power to make him any other return to the regard he expressed for me, than gratitude; and if he would be so much my friend as to influence his mother, either to prevail upon my aunt to receive me, or
to

to let me remain with any creditable person in the country, instead of taking me to London (where I had too much reason to believe I was to be exposed anew to the persecutions of Sir John Belgrave), I should be eternally indebted to him—this he promised to undertake, and seemed to acquiesce in my refusal of his addresses, which, had I been capable of listening to them, it would have been very indiscreet on his part to have pursued; for he was possessed of nothing but the pay of a midshipman, and out of that little had often contributed to relieve the distresses of his parents; and now on hearing of his father's confinement, immediately after his return from a cruise, in which the frigate he was on board had taken two small prizes, he hastened to their assistance; and bearing with sailor-like philosophy all present evils, and never considering those of the future, he was treating for the advance of his pay for the next half year, in order to enable his mother to discharge some debts for which her creditors were very clamorous, before

before she left the town. Yet did he, under such circumstances, think very seriously of a wife—I believe that he supposed the dejection of my spirits was rather owing to my forlorn situation, than to an attachment which he had no notion of as existing after the death of its object, and that I should gradually be induced to listen to his love.”

“ Yet,” cried Orlando warmly, “ yet you talk of the brotherly and of the disinterested regard of this new friend of yours.”

“ It was so in effect, Orlando, and I did not too minutely enquire into the motive of his conduct. Allow me to go on and you will own that we are both much obliged to him. When he fully understood the nature of my situation, my invincible aversion to Sir John Belgrave, and my fears, which, mortifying as they must be to him, I could not help expressing, lest his father should prevail on Mrs. Newill to betray me entirely into his power—he expressed in his rough sea language so much pity for me, and so much indignation at the conduct

duct of his family, that I became persuaded I might trust him. But, alas ! I had nothing to entrust him with—no means of escape from the evils I dreaded to propose to him—except Mrs. Roker, I had no friend or relation in the world.—I had written three letters to Selina, but I received no answer—and she too had, I feared, by the troubles of her own family, been compelled to appear for a while unmindful of her unhappy Monimia.—Young Mr. Newill desired a few hours to consider what he could do for me ; and in that time he talked to his mother of her ungenerous and base conduct in regard to me, with so much effect, that, after a struggle between her necessities and her conscience, she promised her son to receive no more the bribes of Sir John Belgrave, and even to let me quit her, if I insisted upon it. Having obtained thus much, he returned to me, and I was then to determine whither I would go. Oh ! how gladly would I then have accepted of the lowest service ! But who would take a creature apparently so slight

as not to be able to do any kind of household work ; and from such a woman as Mrs. Newill, who was but little esteemed either for her morals or her œconomy ? In this distress I wrote again to Selina, entreating her to enquire for a place for me ; but no answer came in the usual course of the post, and Newill's leave of absence expiring in three days, it became necessary to determine on something. Fruitless as every written application had hitherto been to Mrs. Roker, I could think of nothing better than to address her in person ; and as I dared not go so far alone, being ever in apprehension of meeting Sir John Belgrave, Mr. Newill offered to go with me, and"

"How did you go ?" said Orlando, interrupting her.

"In the stage to Alresford," replied Monimia ; "and from thence we walked to the house, where, however, I was refused admittance by a sister of Roker's, who told me her poor dear sister-in-law was in a bad state of health ; that nobody could be admitted

mitted to see her ; and advised me by all means not to depend upon any thing she could do for me, since her condition put all attention to business out of the question ; and Miss Roker was sorry indeed to remind me, that my perverse undutiful behaviour had not a little contributed to derange the faculties of my worthy relation. I could have answered, that her faculties were certainly deranged when she married Mr. Roker ; but I had no opportunity to make this observation if I had had courage enough—for the woman shut the door in my face, repeating in very rude terms, “that any visits there would be to no purpose.”

“ Thus driven from the habitation of my only relation, I returned more broken-hearted than I set out to Winchester.”

“ And your protector, I suppose, renewed his solicitations by the way ?” said Orlando.

“ No indeed,” answered Monimia, “ he had too much sensibility ; and whatever he might intend for the future, he too much respected

respected the grief into which this cruel repulse had plunged me. The next day but one he was to go back to his duty, with a young shipmate who was visiting his mother then at Southampton, who was to call upon him, that they might return together. While I was yet undetermined what to do, time passed away, and this comrade of Mr. Newill's arrived. It was young Fleming, the eldest son of your friend, whom his mother's relation, an old captain of a man of war, had taken from Winchester college at eighteen, and adopted at his father's death upon condition of his becoming a sailor—a condition which Mrs. Fleming, who had so recently lost her husband, lamented, but dared not oppose. War had just deprived her of her first support; yet him on whom she next relied she was compelled to part with for the same dreadful trade, because her pension, as a lieutenant's widow, which was almost her sole dependence, was very insufficient for the support of her four other children; the two little girls you saw with me last night,

another yet younger, and her second boy, whom her relation partly supports at an academy, intending him also for the sea—and who would have been so much offended, had she thwarted him in regard to taking the eldest son from college, that he would have renounced the whole family.

“To this young man, who was his most intimate friend, Newill communicated, but not without first asking my permission, the difficulties I was under; concealing however those circumstances that seemed to reflect so much disgrace on his mother. They consulted together what I could do...”

“Excellent and proper counsellors truly!” exclaimed Orlando impatiently.

“Less improper than you imagine,” replied Monimia. “Fleming had not, like Newill, been so long at sea as to acquire that steadiness of mind which enables men of that profession to look on all personal danger with indifference, and on moral evil as a matter of course. But yet, recollecting not only his classics, but the romances he had delighted in at school, he had that
natural

natural and acquired tenderness of mind which made him sensible at once of all the discomforts of my situation. He saw in me a poor, deserted heroine of a novel, and nothing could be in his opinion so urgent as my relief.—Accustomed in all emergencies to apply to his mother, to whom he is the most affectionate and dutiful of sons”

“What is become of this Fleming?” enquired Orlando, “is he often at home with his mother?”

“No; he went almost immediately after my first becoming acquainted with her, to the East-Indies—but your impatience, Orlando, will not let me conclude my sad story. Fleming seeing the affair in the light I have described, settled with his friend Newill that the latter should return alone to the ship—make some excuse for Fleming’s being absent two days longer, while he would return to his mother, and endeavour by her means to find some proper asylum for me. The readiness with

which Newill consented to this plan, convinced me of his disinterestedness; though I own I had little hope of its success. I supposed that Mrs. Fleming would have suspected the zeal of so young a man for a woman of my age, in distress, and would decline interfering for a person of whom she could know nothing. But the generosity of my young advocate rendered him eloquent; and she to whom he pleaded was not only naturally of the most candid and humane disposition, but her own sorrows had so softened her heart, that calamity never pleaded to her in vain, though her circumstances are such as do not always enable her to relieve it, as her heart dictates.

“ This excellent woman reflected, that there must be something remarkable in the situation which had made so great an impression on her son; and that even if I was a young woman whom necessity had reduced to a discreditable mode of life, her kindness might yet save me from deeper destruction.

destruction. With this humane persuasion, and remembering always the maxim of doing as she would be done by, she came herself to Winchester, to enquire what she could do for me—thinking, as she has since told me, that she ought to do this, if she hoped for the mercy of Heaven towards her own girls, who might, by so likely an event as her death, be as desolate and friendless as I was. I am too much exhausted, Orlando, to be particular now in relating our first interview. We shall, I hope, have frequent opportunities of admiring the simplicity of character, the goodness of heart, and the attractive manners of my benefactress, who, from your description of your mother, is almost her counterpart. It is sufficient if I tell you that Mrs. Fleming not only implicitly believed my melancholy story, but, as nothing immediately occurred to her for my permanent relief, determined to take me home with her, till some eligible situation could be found. When she had been a

little accustomed to me, she would not part with me; I have been so happy as to make myself useful to her and her children; and in acquitting myself as far as I could of my debt of gratitude, I have found the best and only defence against that regret and anguish which devoured me. She had sorrows enough of her own; I forbore therefore to oppress her with mine, and I tried to be calm when I could not be cheerful; but when the conversation turned on the loss she had sustained in her husband, I mingled my tears with hers, and wept for Orlando."

Orlando, forgetting in this tender confession the little jealousies he had felt, while he considered her liable to the addresses of a rival, now pressed her fondly to his heart; and seeing her quite overcome by the fatigue of relating so long a narrative, and the violence of those emotions she had so lately experienced, consented to leave her, and they parted for the night; though Orlando could not wish her good night with-

out

out protesting to her that he would never again consent to be separated from her, even for a day; for that if ever he was absent from her again, the insolent Sir John Belgrave would incessantly pursue her in imagination, and he should believe her exposed again to dangers and insults which it almost drove him to madness to recollect she had already endured.

C H A P. X.

IN retiring to the room Mrs. Fleming had ordered to be prepared for him, Orlando attempted not to sleep: but his imagination was busied in considering how, since he had so unexpectedly found Monimia, he might escape the misery of ever again parting with her. Poor as he was, he had long since determined, that if she was restored to him, he would marry her, and trust to Providence, and his own exertions, for her support:—and since he had heard all the dangers, trials, and insults, to which her unprotected and desolate situation had made her liable, he could not bear to think of ever quitting her again, even for a day.

Yet, circumstanced as he was, their immediate union was attended with innumerable

able difficulties : his mother would, he feared, be secretly averse, though she might not openly oppose it ; and as to deceiving her, he would not think of it.

Monimia, being under age, could not be married without the consent of her aunt, her only near relation, which he knew it would be impossible to obtain ; and all the other impediments were in the way which occur in regard to a minor, and which there seemed no ways of obviating but by a journey to Scotland. Yet the business of the disputed will, so very important to him, was to come on, as he believed, the ensuing Term, and it was to begin in a few days ; a consideration that, added to the expence of such a journey, out of his little fortune, which was reduced within an hundred and fifty pounds, made him hesitate concerning an expedition so distant and expensive. After long debates with himself, he recollected that Warwick had been married to Isabella at Jersey or Guernsey ; and as he was so near the coast, from whence a passage to those islands might be obtained,

he resolved to propose such an excursion to Monimia, and to procure the consent of the friend to whose kindness she was so much indebted.

This was not difficult; for Mrs. Fleming, prejudiced in favour of Orlando, on account of the friendship her husband had for him, and believing that his mind possessed all those virtues his ingenuous countenance and liberal manners expressed;—knowing too how truly her young friend was attached to him, imagined that she must be happy in such a union, whatever might be their pecuniary difficulties. Monimia had no will but his; and no anxiety now hung on the mind of Orlando, but in regard to his mother.—He doubted whether he ought not to consult her before he married; yet as her disapprobation would only render him and Monimia unhappy, without changing his resolution, he concluded it would be best to trust to her affection for him, and the impression which Monimia's beauty and innocence could not, he thought, fail to make in her favour, when he presented her

her to his mother, as his wife. Very little preparation was necessary for their short voyage.—Mrs. Fleming gave her blessing to the weeping Monimia as she parted with her, and gave it with a tenderness and fervency not always found in the friends who surround the brides of higher fortune.—It was agreed that the young couple should return to her as soon as they were married, and go from thence to London.

Orlando found no difficulty in procuring a vessel to transport them to Guernsey.—Notwithstanding the season of the year, the weather was mild, and the wind favourable. Within ten days from their departure, Orlando brought back his wife to Mrs. Fleming's solitude, secure that death alone could divide them.

They remained with their respectable friend only two days. It was now time for Orlando to be in London, and they hastened thither, too happy to reflect on what was to become of them, and with no other solicitude on their minds, than what arose from the idea of their first meeting with

Mrs. Somerive.—And this dwelt more on the spirits of Orlando, than he chose to communicate to his wife.

On their arrival in town, he ordered the chaise to the chambers of his friend Carr, as he would not abruptly introduce Monimia to his mother. He went alone to procure a lodging in the neighbourhood of his family; which being easily found, they took possession of it in the evening—as Orlando required yet some time to prepare himself for disclosing a secret, which he still feared, manage it how he would, might give pain to his mother.

About one o'clock, however, the following morning he went to Howland-street. His mother, who had been very uneasy at his long absence, received him with even more than her usual affection; but her expressions of pleasure at seeing him, were mingled with tears. All that had happened to his brother, had come to her knowledge; and to his excessive concern, he heard that Philip, after applying to his mother for money, with which she could not supply him,

him, had again disappeared, and was, as they had reason to believe, again imprisoned.

In beholding his mother under such depression of mind, he could not determine to inform her of what might possibly add to it; but instead of speaking to her of Monimia, as he intended, he endeavoured to appease the agony of her mind about Philip, whom he promised to find, and gave her hopes that they should succeed in the recovery of the Rayland estate. To Selina alone he communicated his recent marriage; and found with additional concern, that she dreaded the effect this intelligence would have on her mother, who was already overwhelmed with anxiety for her eldest son, and whose maternal grief had been lately awakened by having heard that her daughter Isabella was certainly living in one of the American islands with her husband, long after they had been given over for lost:—yet, as she had never heard from them, she concluded that her daughter, if yet living, was totally estranged
from

from her family, or regardless of their distress; a reflection not less bitter than it was to consider her as dead. The doubt of what was really her fate, proved perhaps more distressing than any certainty. With all this, were Orlando's marriage to be discovered to her, while she was continually expressing her anxiety how he would himself be supported, Selina dreaded the consequence of her uneasiness; and therefore entreated Orlando to defer the discovery at least for a few days, in hopes that something favourable might happen; while she herself expressed the warmest solicitude to see and embrace Monimia, as her beloved sister; and they agreed that Orlando should find some pretence to take her the next day out with him, and carry her to his lodgings for that purpose.

With an heavy heart he now returned to Monimia, who anxiously expected him.— A poor dissembler, he could not conceal from her the state of his mind; but he led her to believe it was rather owing to the new distress occasioned by Philip's disappearance,

pearance, than to any doubts as to her reception by his mother. Her gentle and soothing conversation was the only balm for his wounded heart ; and while he felt himself unhappy, he considered how much less so he was now, than when, in addition to the calamities of his family, he had the loss of his Monimia to lament, and the dread of all those evils to which her desolate state exposed her.

As soon as he had dined, he set out, in pursuance of his promise to his mother, to find Philip ; but while Carr sent his clerk, and went himself to some of the places where it was but too probable he was to be found, Orlando himself visited another ; but when they met at night at Carr's chambers, all their enquiries were found equally fruitless ; and they agreed, that if this unhappy young man was, as there was too much reason to believe, in confinement, he had taken precautions not to be discovered. With this unsatisfactory intelligence, Orlando, late as it was, went back to his mother ; but, assuring her he would
never

never rest till he had found out and relieved his brother, he told her, that as he must now be constantly engaged with Mr. Carr in arranging the business of the lawsuit, and must be at his chambers early in a morning, he had taken a lodging near him, the time of going so far as from Howland-street to the inn of court being more than he could now spare. This accounted for his absence tolerably well; yet his heart smote him for this temporary deception, which was however, considering his circumstances at this juncture, only a pious fraud.

Another, another, and another day passed away without any news of Philip; and, to add to the vexation of Orlando, he found new difficulties likely to arise in his suit. Old Roker, to whom subornation of perjury was familiar, and every other infamous device which an unprincipled villain could be guilty of, had not only taken the usual method of gaining time by artificial delays, but was, it was feared, putting it out of Mrs. Roker's (Lennard's) power to give her testimony against the will that had been proved,

proved, by making her a lunatic ; he was infamous enough to have taken still more decisive means of quieting both her conscience and her evidence, if they had not been rendered less eligible by the circumstance of great part of her income having been left her for her life only.

Carr, who had all the zeal of a young man for his client, and was perfectly convinced, from the substance of Mr. Walter-son's report, that there had been another will, was yet doubtful of their success against the impudence and chicane of the Rokers ; supported by two such powerful motives, as their own interest, and the purse of a rich body of clergy. Orlando therefore saw with anguish of mind his own little fund dwindling away, without any certainty that such part of it as went to the payment of law expences would ever be repaid him : and the sad idea of Monimia in as great poverty as that from which he had rescued her, continually corroded his heart ; while she, from his long delay in presenting her to his mother, and from the
knowledge

knowledge she had of his little fortune, perceived but too clearly, in a depression of spirits which he could not always disguise, what were his fears. These she tried to dissipate, by assuming herself an air of cheerfulness—"I have always been used to work, Orlando," said she—"you know that I never was brought up to any other expectation—where then will be the difficulty or the hardship of my employing myself to assist in our mutual support? and surely it will be better to begin now, than to wait till our necessities become more pressing. Since I shall not disgrace your family by it; since I am unknown to every body but Selina, who has too much sense to love me less, why should I not directly engage in what sooner or later I must, I ought to have recourse to?"—Orlando, who thought that all the world ought to be at the feet of a creature whose mind seemed to him even more lovely than her person, was so hurt and mortified whenever she thus expressed herself, that she by degrees ceased to repeat it; but as he was

now

now very much out with Carr, she contrived in his absence to apply to a very considerable linen ware-house in the neighbourhood, the proprietors of which at first trusted her with articles of small value to make; by degrees she acquired their confidence! and, by the neatness and punctuality of her performance, entered soon into constant employment.—Orlando saw her always busy; but he made no remarks on what occupied her; and without shocking his tenderness or his pride, she was thus enabled to add a little to the slender stock on which depended their subsistence. Thus in continual combats with himself, whether he ought not to acquaint his mother with his situation, in fruitless enquiries after his brother, and in hopes and fears about the event of his suit, passed the first six weeks of his marriage. — Term was now over, and the discovery of the true will of Mrs. Rayland did not seem to be at all nearer than when he first undertook it.

Encouraged, however, by his friend Carr, to proceed, though he often trembled
at

at the proofs that came to his knowledge, of the successful villany of Roker, Orlando failed not to pursue such means as his solicitor thought most requisite; and, amid all the fatigue and disappointments of the law's delay, which often baffled him where he most sanguinely hoped for advantage, the tenderness, the sweetness of Monimia soothed and tranquillized his troubled spirits; and when he returned to her of an evening, wearied with the contradictory opinions of counsel, or tormented by trifling and unnecessary forms, he seemed to be transported from purgatory to paradise, and forgot that, if some favourable event did not soon occur, he should be unable to support this adored being, to whom he was more fondly attached as an husband than he had been as a lover.

His mother, who had been at first satisfied with his reasons for absenting himself from her house, now began (since his law-business was she thought for a while suspended) to express her uneasiness that he no longer resided with her. To the expression

pression of this discontent she was particularly excited by her brother, Mr. Woodford, whose boisterous manners, though softened even to mean obsequiousness before his superiors, were still exerted to keep in subjection the mild and timid spirit of his sister, who considered herself besides as obliged to him, because he had afforded her some small pecuniary assistance, rather to preserve his own pride from being wounded, than to oblige or serve her.

Orlando, extremely disgusted by the reception he met with at the house of his uncle on his arrival in London, had never again visited him; and had avoided, as if by accident, meeting him at his mother's; where he did not indeed often visit, being become a much richer, and consequently a much greater man, since he had been the *ostensible* possessor of a very lucrative contract, which he held to so much advantage as reconciled him to the necessity of relinquishing a seat in parliament for a Cornish borough, with which he had obliged some of his powerful friends. He was not therefore

fore a *representative of twenty or thirty electors, who had been paid for their suffrages at so much a head*; but such were now his qualifications of purse and of pride, that he was admitted to the cabals of those who had the distinction of an M. P. after their names; and was often closeted with the secretaries of yet greater men, consulted on loans, let into the secret of stocks, and was accommodated with scrip and other douceurs with which those who *deserve well of government* are gratified; he was besides a director of an opulent company, and received, in addition to the salary of the office, considerable presents from those who had favours to request. Mrs. Woodford waddled about in the most valuable shawls; mandarins and josses nodded over her chimneys; and pagodas and japans ornamented her rooms. The two young ladies were both married; the elder to a merchant, who was a sharer in some of the fortunate adventures of his father-in-law, and besides in a flourishing business. His lady was one of the elegant and fashionable

women on the other side Temple-bar : but the little circumstance of her being compelled to live on that other side, continually embittered her good fortune : having been accustomed to see people who are called of rank, in the early part of her life, she was so much flattered by having acquired admission to some few now, that she talked of nothing but lords. If she related what happened at the opera, Lord Robert was sitting by her at the time, and said so and so ; if she spoke of her losses or successes at cards, Lady Frances or Lady Louisa were her party ; and sometimes Sir James or Sir George betted on her side : but whenever this equestrian order were introduced, she took care to impress upon the minds of her audience, that she spoke of men who really bore the arms of Ulster, and not of any paltry city knight ; whom, together with every thing in the city, she held in sovereign contempt ; having quite forgotten herself, and desiring that every body else should forget the preceding years, when she was a wine-merchant's daughter
in

in the Strand, and glad of an hackney-coach to a benefit play ; or supremely happy to be acquainted with any one who kept their own carriage, and would take her "to the other end of the town."

The acquaintance and notice of General Tracy had been almost their first step towards emerging from middling life to the confines of fashion ; therefore the lady now in question, and her sister, who was become the wife of a counsellor in Lincoln's-inn-fields, were never able to forgive the Some-rive family, for having first fascinated the uncle, and then the nephew, whose notice they had always coveted, because he was among the first of those who had obtained the name of "a fashionable man about town," and one whose approbation was decisive in determining on the beauty and elegance of the female candidates for general admiration.

Young Woodford too, though he had failed of marrying the rich young Jewess, either because of his indifference towards her, or of the preference she gave at the time

time he was first acquainted with her to Orlando, had since married the daughter of a great underwriter, and was in high affluence. The whole of the Woodford family, being thus circumstanced, looked down with contempt on the remains of that of Somerive; and, under the semblance of pity, enjoyed their depression, particularly that of Orlando, of whom, in talking of him to his mother, Mr. Woodford affected to speak with great concern.

“ ’Tis of no use,” said he, “ to remember what is passed, since to be sure it only serves to vex one; but I must say, it was a thousand pities, sister Somerive, that you suffered this young man to refuse the advantageous offer that I made him. If I had taken him into my house, only think how differently he would have been situated from what he is now!—God bless my soul, I declare ’tis a sad thing!—In the first place, he would have been now as well off as Martin my partner is now, which, let me tell you, is no bad thing; besides that as

my nephew, and in partnership with *me*, he might have married, let me tell you, any woman of fortune in the city, and might now be a man of the first consideration; nay, in parliament for aught I know.—Instead of that, what is the case now?—First of all, there was waiting upon and coaxing that foolish, proud old woman, who after all did nothing for him; but saw him set off with a brown musket, to be shot at for half a-crown a day, or whatever it is; and then forsooth left her estate to a parcel of fat-gut parsons, as if that would do her old squeazy soul any good in t'other world—For my part, I don't desire to vex you—what is done, why, it cannot be helped: only I must say that 'tis a devilish kettle of fish altogether. Here, instead of this young fellow's being an help to you, he is like, for what I can see, to be a burthen. Since things are as they are, I see no reason why he should be humoured in idleness now, and, under pretence of following up this law-suit, lounge away any more of his time: as to the recovery of the Rayland estate,
you

you may as well sue for so many acres in the moon; take my word for it, sister Somerive."

This brutish speech being answered only by the sighs and tears of the dejected auditor, her consequential brother stopped a moment for breath, and then proceeded:

"However, don't be cast down: you know that though my opinion has always gone for nothing, I am always willing to serve you, sister; and so I wish you would, before 'tis too late, and before your youngest son goes the way of your eldest, think a little of making him do something to get himself on in the world:—for my part, and I'm sure every body as knows any thing of life and human nature, will agree with me, that the boy will be undone if he goes on as he does at present; and I give you warning, that in a little time there won't be a pin to choose between him and that hopeful youth, 'squire Philip."

This was almost too much for poor Mrs. Somerive, who however commanded her

tears and sobs so far as to ask her brother what reason he had to think so.

He then communicated to her, as he assured her in perfect friendship, that there was great reason to suppose Orlando kept a mistress, and was lavishing on her the small remains of the money his commission had sold for; and upon her beseeching him to tell her what reason he had to believe so, he informed her that not only it was false that Orlando had taken a lodging near the inns of court in order to be near Carr, but that he actually lived within two streets of his mother's house, with a young woman who had of late been frequently met with him of an evening, leaning on his arm, and whom, on enquiry, he was found to have brought with him from the country.

Thunderstruck with intelligence which Orlando's general air of absence and impatience when he was with his family gave her too much reason to believe was true, and dreading lest she had lost the sole stay on which she depended for the protection of her two girls in case of her death, the unhappy

happy mother gave herself up to tears, nor could the rough hand of her cruel brother succeed in drying them. Distressed so cruelly, she caught eagerly at whatever had the appearance of relieving her, and therefore promised to adhere to the advice Mr. Woodford gave her. He recommended it to her to press Orlando's return to her house: "by which," said he, "you will soon find out, if you don't believe it yet, that your pious good boy is not a whit better than t'other. And let me also desire you'll not let him go on helter skelter in this law-suit, with no better advice than a whiffled-headed fellow such as Carr can give him or get for him; but send him to Mr. Darby, my son-in-law, a man I can tell you that knows what he's about, and is a thriving man in the law. He shall not charge any thing upon your account for his advice; so you'll save five or ten guineas at once. I'll speak to Mr. Darby; and in the mean time, d'ye see, do you have some serious conversation with your son. Let him find out that we are not so easily to be

gull'd; and that 'twont do to take old birds with chaff."

Mrs. Somerive then promised to do as he dictated; and he left her, after this conversation, one of the most miserable beings on earth.

Orlando, the next time he saw his mother, found the effects of his uncle's ungenerous interference. She received him with an air of constraint to which he was little accustomed, and which seemed to be attended with extreme pain to herself: she questioned him in a tone she had never taken up before; seemed dissatisfied with his answers, which certainly were embarrassed and contradictory; and ended the conversation with telling him that, unless he would extremely disoblige her, he must lay the whole state of the question as to the Rayland estate before Mr. Darby, his cousin's husband. This Orlando promised to do, being very desirous of obliging his mother wherever he could do it without betraying a secret which he thought it would distress her to know; and, desirous to end as soon

as he could a conversation so painful, he agreed to go directly to Carr, and procure a proper state of the affair for the opinion of counsel; and to wait on Mr. Darby the next morning, against which time Mrs. Somerive was to give him notice, by Mr. Woodford, of the application of this client.

Orlando owed too much to the good nature, integrity, and industry of his friend Carr, not to use the greatest precaution against offending him; but the moment he opened his business, and told him what his mother had insisted upon, Carr very candidly offered to promote this application without prejudice to those he had already made; and the case, and steps already taken in the business, having been prepared, Orlando waited the next day on Mr. Darby according to his own appointment, and for the first time was introduced to him at once as his cousin and his client. The lady, formerly Miss Eliza Woodford, "kept her state;" and Orlando, instead of being shewn into her dressing-room to wait till Mr. Darby should be at liberty to speak

to him, as he would naturally have been if he had fortunately been a rich relation, was shewn into a back room, surrounded by books that seemed more for shew than use, and desired to wait.

Here he remained more than half an hour, before his relation learned in the law appeared. He was a tall, awkward, raw-boned man, with a pale face, two small wild grey eyes, and a squirrel-coloured riding-wig; who, having coldly saluted his new acquaintance, took his case, and, looking slightly over it as Orlando explained his situation, he said (drawing in his breath at every word, and doubling in his lips so that they disappeared)—“Hum, hah; hum—I see Hum, hum, hum; I observe a!—Hum a!—I perceive a!—Yes a—Hum!—dean and chapter—hum; so a—Doctor Hollybourn a, hum—I know him—hum a—know him a little” Then rubbing his forehead, added, “a respectable—hum! a—man, a—a Doctor Hollybourn—man of very considerable, hum, a—property, a—hum, a——”

Orlando,

Orlando, marvelling how this man, with his inverted lips, and the hum-a's that broke every second word, could be reckoned to make a respectable figure at the bar, now began, as the eloquent counsel was silent, another explanatory speech; which, however, he was not allowed to finish, for Mr. Darby, again assuring him that Doctor Hollybourn was very rich, and of course very respectable, said, he could not think that—hum, a—the doctor, so worthy a man as he was, would be accessary in—hum a, injuring any one, or keeping the right heir out of his estate; but, hum a—hum a—there must be some misrepresentation: but that, however, he was engaged that morning with two-briefs, of the utmost importance; therefore, he would consider the thing at his leisure, and let him know in a few days—hum a—.”——Orlando, then leaving his compliments to Mrs. Darby, hastened away, rather repenting of his visit, and having gained, he thought, nothing by it, but what was likely to end in a hum a!

On his return to Carr's chambers, his friend accosted him with an enquiry how he liked the special pleader?—"A special pleader d'ye call him?" cried Orlando; "for Heaven's sake, wherefore?"

"Because it is our name," replied Carr, "for a particular branch of our profession."

"Curse the fellow!" cried Orlando—"A special pleader! why he cannot speak at all—with his hum a, and hum a."

"That would not signify so much," said Carr, "if the man was honest; but I may say to you, that, under the most specious professions of honesty, I don't believe there is a more crafty or mercenary head in Westminster Hall, than that orange tawny caxon of his covers. The hesitation and embarrassment of his oratory was at first the effect of stupidity; but by degrees, as acquired chicane supplies the place of natural talent, he has continued it, because it is a sort of excuse for never giving an immediate or positive answer; and while he is hum a-ing and haw a-ing, he is often considering

considering how he may best make his advantage of the affairs confided to him."

"Good God!" exclaimed Orlando; "and why, then, would you let me apply to such a man?"

"Nay," replied Carr, "how could I pretend to engage you to decline a reference recommended by your mother? Besides, you know, my friend, that in our profession we make it a rule never to speak as we think. What? would you have an apothecary declaim against a physician in whose practice it is to occasion the greatest demand for drugs?"

"Hang your simile!" said Orlando: "I am afraid you are all rogues together."

"More or less, my good friend—some of more sense than others, and some a little, little more conscience—but, for the rest, I am afraid we are all of us a little too much professional rogues; though some of us, as individuals, would not starve the orphan, or break the heart of the widow—but in our vocation, Hal! labouring in our voca-

tion, we give all remorse of that sort to the winds."

"Would your profession were annihilated, then!" cried Orlando.

"Why, I do not believe," answered Carr, "that the world would be much the worse if it were; but, my friend, not to be too hard upon *us*, do reflect on the practices of other professions. The little, smirking fellow, with so smiling an aspect, and so well-powdered a head, whom you see pass in his chariot, administers to his patient the medicines a physician orders, though he knows they are more likely to kill than cure; and, in his account at night, thinks not of the tears of a family whom he has seen in the greatest distress, but of the bill he shall have for medicines and attendance. The merchant, who sits down in his counting-house, and writes to his correspondent at Jamaica, that his ship, the Good Intent of Liverpool, is consigned to him at Port-Royal with a cargo of slaves from the coast of Guinea, calculates the profits of a fortunate adventure, but never considers the
tears

tears and blood with which this money is to be raised. He hears not the groans of an hundred human creatures confined together in the hold of a small merchantman—he”

“Do,” cried Orlando, “dear Carr, finish your catalogue of human crimes, unless you have a mind to make me go home and hang myself.”

“No man would do that,” answered Carr, “who had such a lovely wife as you have—she would reconcile me to a much worse world than this is.”

The friends then parted; Orlando very far from being satisfied with his visit to his cousin learned in the law—and very uneasy, on his arrival at his mother’s, to observe, in her behaviour to him, increased symptoms of that discontent he had observed the day before.

C H A P. XL.

N EARLY six weeks more now passed; another Term was almost wasted in those contrived delays which destroy all the boasted energy and simplicity of the British laws; when Mr. Carr advised Orlando to see Dr. Hollybourn himself; which, however disagreeable it was to him, he at length consented to do, at the earnest and repeated request of one who he believed had his real interest much at heart. Orlando had lately suffered so much uneasiness at the deception he had been and was still guilty of towards his mother, that he found it almost impossible for him to continue it; but he was continually withheld from the avowal he wished to make, by the tears of Selina, and by his fears for the effect that a reluctant, or even an affectionate reception

tion might have on the timid spirits of his wife, whose situation increased his tenderness and anxiety; while his reduced finances filled him with the most painful solicitude, as he reflected that, when they were quite exhausted, he should have nothing to support his Monimia and the infant he expected she would give him.

Sacrificing to the remotest hope of benefiting objects so precious to him, his own reluctance to make a very disagreeable visit, he repaired to the residence of Dr. Hollybourn, at an hour when he was told the reverend Divine was most likely to be at home.

On his arrival, however, he heard the Doctor was out: but as a coach was waiting at the door, he doubted this: and, while he was yet speaking to the footman at the door, another from the top of the stairs called out, "Let counsellor Darby's coach draw up!"—Orlando then stepped forward into the hall, telling the servant that he had very particular business with Dr. Hollybourn, and could not call again;

therefore that he must see him:—at the same moment Mr. Darby himself hurried down stairs, and Orlando met him in the hall.—The lawyer seemed in as much confusion when he met him, as such a lawyer is capable of being: slightly bowing, and muttering something of haste as he passed, he hurried into his coach; while Orlando, without waiting for the return of the footman, who was gone up to announce him to the Doctor, walked up stairs, and entered a very elegant room, where the worthy Doctor, looking more than ever like the uncle of Gil Blas, was squatted on a sofa, with some papers before him, which, on the appearance of Orlando (whom he was ordering his servant to dismiss), he huddled away in some confusion.

Orlando now approached, and in few words opened his business, laying some stress upon the hardships he had suffered in being deprived of an estate to which his father was undoubtedly next heir, while it went to enrich a body who had no manner

ner of occasion for such an acquisition of wealth.

The divine professor of humility and charity—he who some few months before offered his most accomplished daughter to the then fortunate Orlando, now deigned not to ask him to sit; but, cocking up his little red nose, and plumping down again on his cushion, he began to snuffle forth his wonder at this application. He said, “God forbid, young man, that I, as executor to the late worthy lady of Rayland Hall, whose soul is now with the blessed, should defraud you or any man! But that pious woman, the last remains of an ancient, honourable, and religious family, to be sure knew best what would most contribute to the glory of the Lord, and the good of his creatures; among the poor and needy of whom she left her noble fortune to be divided, and I shall take care most sacredly to perform her worthy wish, and to sanctify her estate to the holy purposes she intended it for.”

Orlando, who could not command the
indignation

indignation he felt against this canting hypocrite, now very loudly and peremptorily demanded to know, "Whether Doctor Hollybourn was not well apprised, that there was a will made by Mrs. Rayland, after that under which his society claimed the estate? and whether two persons had not declared, at Rayland Hall, that they knew it to be so, whose evidence Roker had since been employed to stifle?"—To this the Doctor said, "He understood he was to reply upon oath in putting in his answer to the bill in chancery, and therefore he should now say nothing: but if you, young man, have any thing more to say, you know where to find Mr. Roker, my solicitor; to him I refer you.—Here—Richard!—Peter!—John!—shew this person down!"—Orlando, by no means disposed to submit to this cavalier treatment, though the age and profession of the Doctor protected him from the effects of the resentment he felt, began however a more severe remonstrance; which the Doctor not being disposed to listen to, rose from

from his sofa, and with the grace of a terrier bitch on the point of pupping, he waddled into the next room, and shut the door. Orlando then finding his attempts to argue such a sordid and selfish being into any sense of justice totally useless, left the house, and, returning to his friend Carr, related his adventures; where he had the mortification to have his suspicions confirmed by Carr, that, so far from his application to Mr. Darby being likely to produce any good, there was every appearance that he had entered the lists on the other side—"And this," said Carr, "has been a frequent practice with him; it being with this worthy man an invariable maxim, inherited I believe from his father, that no man is poor, but from his own faults and follies—for which, though no man has been guilty of more than he has in the former part of his life, he professes to have no pity—And as to law, he is not much out, nor was your honest friend the miller, in saying, that he who has the longest purse
is

is in this country the most frequently successful."

Orlando, with an heart not much lightened by the transactions of the day, returned to his lodgings to a late dinner.—Monimia was ill, a circumstance that added to the gloom that hung over him:—she made light of it however, and endeavoured to restore to him that cheerfulness, of which, she observed with great uneasiness, he had been some time deprived; but it is difficult to communicate to others sensations we do not feel ourselves.—She smiled, but tears were in her eyes—She assured him she suffered nothing; but he saw her pale and languid, and now was confirmed in what he had long fancied, that the air of London did not agree with her; and it was with inexpressible anguish he reflected, that now, when the tenderest attention to her health was necessary, he was deprived of the means of procuring her country air, which, as spring advanced, she seemed to languish for.—London, where she had never been before, was at first unpleasant, and
now

now disgusting to her ; but she never betrayed this but by accident, and wished Orlando to believe that with him every place was to her a heaven.

He now more seldom went to his mother's than he used to do ; because, since her dialogue with Mr. Woodford, all her tenderness for him did not prevent her teasing him with questions, and very earnestly pressing him to return to his usual apartment in her house. This somewhat estranged him from his family : but in absenting himself, he found no peace ; for though he saw less of his mother and sisters than he used to do, he was as fondly attached to them as ever : and while he thought he saw, in the conduct of his mother, new reasons to adhere to that secrecy which it had already given him so much pain to observe, he imputed it all to the influence of the unfeeling and mercenary Mr. Woodford, and, in his most gloomy moods, wished that so unhappy a being as he was had never been born. A thousand times he repented of his having ever left
Rayland

Rayland Hall, to which unfortunate absence all his subsequent disappointments were owing; and sometimes lamented, though he could not repent, that he had married his Monimia, without being able to shield her, as his wife, from the poverty of her former lot.

Nothing gave him more mortification, than to find that his mother was not satisfied with his conduct in regard to Mr. Darby; and would not be persuaded that it was the affluence of his opposers, and not his doubts about the cause, that prevented his engaging in it. Mr. Woodford, taking advantage of the faith his sister reposed in him as understanding business, had so harassed her with representations of Orlando's neglect, the inexperience of Carr, and the want of skill in the counsel he employed, that Mrs. Somerive now often pressed him to leave the management of the whole to his uncle, and to withdraw it from Carr; and wearied by these importunities, and by the delays which the adverse party seemed determined still to contrive, Orlando was sometimes

sometimes half tempted to give up the pursuit, and, with the little money he yet had left, to retire to some remote village, where, wholly unknown, he might work at any certain, though laborious business, for the support of his wife and child :—but, when he saw the tears that his mother shed in speaking to him of his brother Philip, who had entirely deserted his family, after having, as far as he could, undone it, he could not determine to plunge her into equal, perhaps greater uneasiness on his account ; and he then resolved rather to suffer any pain himself, than to fail in those duties which he felt he ought to fulfil.

It was in one of the most melancholy moods, which the increasing difficulties of his situation inspired, that Orlando, sitting alone in the little dining-room of his lodgings, when Monimia's indisposition confined her to her bed, that he composed a little ode to Poverty, which he had hardly put upon paper, when Carr came in, to whom he carelessly shewed it. Carr, who had a taste for poetry, desired a copy of it ;
to

to which Orlando replied, "that he was too idle to copy it, but that he might have the original, for he should himself perhaps never look at it again." Carr put it into his pocket, and, asking "if he might do what he would with it?" Orlando answered, "Yes," and thought no more about it.

Carr had often told Orlando, as they talked over his situation together, "that he had literary talents, which might be employed to advantage;" and he said, "he should get acquainted with some of the writers of the day, who were the most esteemed, or at least the most fashionable, who would help him into notice."

"Nay," said Orlando, "if what I write will not help me into notice, I am afraid, my friend, the trade of authorship, which will not do without recommendation, will be but little worth following."

"It is not certainly," replied his friend, "the very best trade that can be followed in any way, but yet is not so despicable as you suppose:—for example, if you could write a play now, and get it received by
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the managers ; and if it should be successful”

“ Dear Carr,” cried Orlando, “ how many ifs are here !—I have no dramatic talents ; nor, if I had, do I know one of the managers ; or could I conquer, by dint of attendance, the difficulties which, I have heard you say, they throw in the way of authors—I should probably not be successful.”

“ And yet,” said Carr, “ there have been very successful authors, who have not the natural turn to poetry which you seem to me to have ; indeed, who have none ; but who have contrived, by bringing together a few scenes without any plot, a scattering of equivocal expressions, and some songs (which, being set to pretty music, we do not discover are not even rhyme), have really had wonderful success ; and those who have succeeded once, get into fashion, and succeed in a second piece, because they have done so in the first.”

“ They must, however,” said Orlando,

VOL. IV.

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“ have

“ have more genius than you are willing to allow them,”

“ You shall judge, if you will,” said Carr, “ of them, as far as conversation will enable you to judge.—A relation of mine is a constant attendant at the conversations of one of our celebrated authoresses—I have sometimes gone thither with him, and have been often invited to go, since my first introduction, either with him, alone, or with any literary friend. The lady is never so well pleased as when her room is crowded with men, who either are, or fancy they are men of genius. She professes to dote upon, to adore genius in our sex; though, in her own, she will hardly allow it to any body but herself.”

Orlando hesitated, at first, whether it was worth while to give up Monimia’s company for an evening, for the sake of being introduced into this society, of which he did not form any very great expectations; but Carr, who saw how much his spirits were depressed, urged him to try the experiment. “ The assembly is not, I own,”
said

said he, “ the very first of the kind in London ; for, to the first, neither my relation or I have any chance of being admitted ; but, I assure you, the lady of whom I speak is celebrated for her wit, and for the novelty of her poetry, if not for that of her plays ; and you will find some people there, who may be worth being acquainted with.”

Orlando then consented to go on the following Friday, and Carr attended him accordingly.

He was introduced to a little ill-made woman, with a pale complexion, pitted with the small-pox ; two defects which her attachment to literature did not prevent her from taking all possible pains to conceal : there was in her air a conviction of self-consequence, which predominated over the tender languor she affected—Indeed it was towards the gentlemen only that this soft sensibility was apparently exhibited : Ladies, and especially those who had any pretence to those acquirements in which she believed herself to excel, were seldom

or never admitted; and she professed to hold them in contempt.

Though no longer young, she believed herself still an object of affection and admiration; and that the beauties of her mind were irresistible to all men of taste.—They were indeed of a singular cast: but as there are collectors of grotesque drawings, and books, no otherwise valuable than because they are old; so there were minds who contemplated hers with some degree of admiration; who thought her verses were really poetry, and that her dramas (the productions of writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries modernized) had really merit. As she was by no means insensible to perfection, if it appeared in the form of a young man, she was immediately struck with the figure and address of Orlando; and, amidst the something which was called wit and literary conversation that now began, she addressed herself particularly to him—enquired into his studies, and his taste in poetry—besought him to favour her with some of his productions, and seemed disposed

disposed to elect him to emulate, if not to rival, the Florios and Philanders with whom she held a tender correspondence in the news-papers.

Orlando, naturally of a gay temper, and easily seizing the ridiculous, entered at once into this singular character; and before he had been half an hour in the company of this modern Centlivre, she declared in a loud whisper to Carr, whom she beckoned across the room to come to her, "that he was the most divine creature she had ever conversed with." A gentleman was now announced by the name of Mr. Lorrain, at whose arrival the lady of the house expressed great pleasure; and said to Orlando, "Oh, Mr. Somerive! I shall now have an opportunity of introducing you to one of the most sublime geniuses of the age—a man of the warmest fancy, of the most exquisite wit."—Orlando looked towards the door where this phænomenon was expected to enter, and saw, to his utter astonishment, a gentleman who seemed to him to be—Warwick.

He remained riveted to his chair, gazing on the stranger, who approached the lady of the house without noticing her guests. After he had however paid her some very extravagant compliments on her looks, and received her answers, which were designed to be at once tender and spirited, she desired to introduce him to a newly-acquired friend of hers; and Mr. Lorrain, turning his eyes to the young man who sat next her, discovered immediately, by the wonder expressed in his looks, that in this new acquaintance of hers, he had found an old acquaintance of his own.

A few confused words were all that either the one or the other was at first able to utter. Orlando, not much pleased with a change of name, which he thought boded no good to his sister, enquired very earnestly after her:—his brother-in-law, in increased confusion, which he seemed endeavouring to conquer, answered, “that she was well;” and then, as he found Orlando in no humour to connive at the deception, which for some reason or other he chose to practice,

practice, as to his name and situation, he took him by the arm, and begged he would walk with him to the other end of the room, where he told him, in a hurried way, "that he was but lately come to England, after a variety of distresses, and being afraid of his creditors, and for other reasons which he would hereafter give him, he had changed his name for the present;" of which he desired him not to speak in the company they were then in. "But my sister, Sir," said Orlando, "where is my sister?—has *she* too changed her name?"—"Of course," replied Warwick, who seemed hurt at the vehemence with which he spoke.—"Well, Sir; but by whatever name you choose to have her called, you will allow me immediately to see her—Is she in town?"

"Yes," replied Warwick coldly; "here is a card that will direct you to her—All I request is your silence this evening in regard to my change of name; a matter that surely cannot be material to any one here."

Orlando assented to this, and they re-

turned together towards Mrs. Manby, the lady of the house, to whom Warwick, assuming again the name of Lorrain, said, in a careless way, "that he now owed her another obligation, by having been introduced by her means, to an old friend, for whom, ever since his arrival in London, he had been enquiring in vain." The conversation then became general. Some other visitors arrived, some departed; and Orlando, impatient to have some private conversation with Warwick, asked "if he would accompany him and his friend Carr?"—To this he assented; but Mrs. Manby would not release them till they had promised to visit her again the following week.

Carr, as soon as he learned from Orlando who Warwick really was, took leave of him, under pretence of business in another part of the town; and as the evening was fine, Orlando and his brother-in-law walked homewards together.

As soon as they were alone, the former expressed his surprise at meeting thus unexpectedly

expectedly, and under another name, one who had so long been given up for lost; and his still greater wonder, that it was possible for his sister to be in London, without having seen or made any enquiry after her mother and sisters, or her family.

“Suspend your astonishment, Somerive,” said Warwick, “or at least suspend your blame: when you hear all we have suffered, and all we have contended with, you will find at least no occasion for the latter; and though I own it appears extraordinary that my wife has not yet sought her family, that circumstance will seem less so, when you know that it is not above three weeks since we came out of Scotland; and that, after our long detention in America, we returned to Europe, without being able to return to England—and have been in Spain, in Portugal, in Ireland, and at length in Scotland.—When I can relate to you in detail all these adventures*, you will find more to pity, than to reproach us for.”

“But, my dear Warwick,” said Orlando,

* Which may perhaps appear in a detached work.

who already forgave what he had before thought there was cause to resent, "will not our Isabella see her mother now?—Will not she give this inexpressible comfort to a tender parent, who has never ceased to regret her loss?"

"You must settle that with her, my friend, to-morrow, when I beg you will breakfast with us. Your sister has two little boys to present to you, and will be delighted I know to see you, but it must not be without some preparation." Orlando promised to be with them at breakfast; and on Warwick's expressing a wish to hear how he was himself situated, he gave a brief detail of all that had happened from their last parting at Rayland Hall to the present time.

Warwick heard him with attention, and then said, "So, my dear boy! it does not appear that thy piety has succeeded better than my rashness:—I have been disinherited and bedeviled by my uncle for marrying a girl I liked—and you, who sacrificed your own inclinations to your virtue,

have been disinherited, for these orthodox fellows in their cauliflower wigs and short aprons—Why, you could not have been worse served, if you had taken off your little nymph with you to America, as I took off mine.”

“ Yes, surely,” replied Orlando, “ I should have been worse off ; for I should not have what is now, and will be, in whatever extremity I may be, my greatest consolation, the consciousness that I have never, to gratify myself, given pain to those who had a claim to my duty ; and that if I am unfortunate, I have at least not deserved my ill fortune.”

“ Bravo ! cried Warwick—

“ ’Tis not in mortals to command success ;

“ But we’ll do more, Sempronius—we’ll deserve it.”

I wish you joy, my young Cato ; but for my part, I find I have no qualms of conscience about bilking the old boy in Grosvenor Place—I rather think I have done him a kindness, and perhaps one day or other he may find it out.”

“In the mean time, however, I suppose General Tracy remains inexorable.”

“Faith!” answered Warwick, “I have never tried; and one reason of my taking another name was, that he might not know I was in England.”

They were now arrived at a street where, as Warwick’s lodgings were near Leicester Square, and those of Orlando in a street near Oxford street, it was necessary for them to part for the evening. Orlando, whose affection for Isabella was already revived, sent her a thousand kind remembrances; and Warwick, in return, told him, “he longed to be introduced to the nymph of the enchanted tower,” whom he never had an opportunity of seeing at Rayland Hall. Orlando, after he had left him, considered with astonishment the volatility of his temper.—His person was a little altered by change of climate; but his spirits were not at all depressed by a change of situation so great as between being the heir of General Tracy, and a wandering adventurer, for he did not conceal from his friend that

such was his present situation ; that it was in consequence of his having written something for the news-papers, that he had become acquainted with Mrs. Manby, who had answered them ; and that he was now soliciting the managers to accept of a play he had finished. The humiliating attendance which he owed this pursuit seemed likely to render necessary, was added to the reasons he had already given Orlando why he wished to be known at present only as Mr. Lorrain.

C H A P. XII.

ON his return home, Orlando related to his wife his extraordinary meeting with Warwick; and though he expressed great delight in knowing that his sister was living and well, he could not but feel concern for the situation in which he found her. He knew not whether Warwick did not, notwithstanding his apparent gaiety and carelessness, repent him of his precipitate marriage; and he feared, that, by a man of so volatile a temper, the evils of narrow circumstances would not be softened to Isabella.

He hastened to her the next morning, and she received him with blended emotions of joy and distress particularly affecting. It was not till some time after Warwick left them together, that Isabella had courage to ask the circumstances of her father's

ther's death ; yet she was consoled by hearing, that *her* elopement did not appear to have hastened it. Orlando then entreated her to determine on seeing her mother immediately, and she left it to him to manage it as he would. He embraced her two lovely children with affection, and could not behold them, without representing to her how necessary it was to think of some means to reconcile Warwick to General Tracy.

Isabella answered, " that they had come to London with that intention ; but that Warwick's pride, and his uncle's having certainly made a will in favour of his brother's son, had combined to throw difficulties in the way of a reconciliation ; and she now despaired of Warwick's pursuing his hopes of it, or of their being crowned with success if he did.—His change of name," she said, " had been made partly to avoid his creditors, who now believed him dead, till he could find means of paying them ; and partly that General Tracy might not be informed of his being in London, till he
could

could know whether there was a likelihood of his being forgiven." The vivacity of Isabella seemed subdued, but she was not dejected; and after she had wept over the account of her father's death, her brother's misconduct, and the dispersion of her family, she recovered some degree of cheerfulness, and seemed to prepare herself for an interview with her mother, with more resolution than, from all that had happened, Orlando thought it possible for her to assume.

This formidable meeting was fixed for the next day; and when Orlando left his sister, he began to consider if he might not, at the same time, acknowledge his own marriage, and put an end, at once, to the state of uneasiness, and consciousness of violated integrity which he now was in.

When he rapped at his own door, he was told by the maid who opened it, "that the porter whom he saw in the passage had been waiting for him some time with a letter, which he was directed to deliver into no hands but his own." He opened it with precipitation,

precipitation, and found these words written in a hand hardly legible :

“ DEAR ORLANDO,

“ IF my having left you so long ignorant of what is become of me, has not entirely estranged you from me—come to me at the place the bearer will shew you, and perhaps it will be the last trouble you will ever receive from

“ Yours,

“ P. SOMERIVE.”

Orlando, shocked and surprised, enquired of the man, who stood by, “ where he had left the gentleman who sent him?”—The man replied, “ that he had orders not to answer, but to shew him the way :—that the gentleman was ill in bed, and given over by the doctor.” Still more alarmed by this account, he bade the man wait a moment, while he went up to speak to Monimia, in order to account for his being so much longer absent, and then hastened with

with his conductor to an obscure street leading from the Strand to Covent Garden; where, in an attic room, very dirty and very ill furnished, Orlando found his unhappy brother, in an illness which seemed to be the last stage of a rapid decline, brought on by debauchery and excess.

It might give too tragic a colouring to the conclusion of this narrative, were the scenes of some days to be minutely described—it may therefore suffice to state, that Orlando could not conceal from his mother the situation of her eldest son, who, conscious of his approaching end, and conscious too of all his offences towards her, implored her pity and forgiveness. In his repentance, however late, his mother forgot his errors, and as solicitously tried to save him as if he had never offended her.—With difficulty he was removed to her own house, where she constantly attended him, with Orlando, and where there were for some days, hopes of his recovery.—It was in this interval that Orlando, who could not bear to be so constantly separated from
Monimia,

Monimia, and whose heart continually reproached him with the deception he was guilty of towards his mother, concerted with Selina the means of declaring both his marriage, and the return of Isabella to London. Mrs. Somerive, on the point of losing one of her children, embraced, with transport, the daughter she had so long believed lost; and though she trembled for the consequence of Orlando's marriage, when there seemed so little probability of his finding a support for a family, she acknowledged that Monimia, of whom she soon became passionately fond, was an apology for his indiscretion. With the tenderest assiduity, Monimia shared the fatigue of attending on the dying brother of her husband; and in despite of the remonstrances and displeasure of Mr. Woodford, who did all he could to irritate his sister against Orlando, and who mingled the pecuniary favours which she was obliged to owe him, with admonitions and reproaches that destroyed all their value, Mrs. Somerive not only forgave Orlando, but seemed to
love

love him more fondly than ever. That cruel want of money, which too often divides families, and estranges even the child from the parent, served only to unite this family more closely. The pride of Warwick alone kept him at a greater distance than the rest; and unable, under his present circumstances, to appear as he once did, he could not bear to appear at all before those, who had once seen him so differently situated. He avoided therefore going to the house, when he thought there was a probability of his meeting any of the Woodford family; none of them indeed but Woodford himself were very likely to be there; but from him Warwick would have flown with more apprehension than from the rest, not only on account of his coarse jokes, but because of his connection with General Tracy.

But Isabella, though equally desirous of escaping the unfeeling raillery or cold remonstrance of her uncle, was, without meeting him, constantly with her family, and was, with Monimia and Selina, the support

port of the unhappy Mrs. Somerive, when, after lingering about a fortnight after his removal, her eldest son expired in the arms of Orlando.

There is a degree of folly, and of vice, which gradually dissolves the tenderest affections, weans the friend from the beloved companion of youth, and renders the ties of blood the most galling and insupportable chains. To this point of irreclaimable misconduct Philip Somerive had long since arrived. He had too plainly evinced, that to his own selfish gratifications he would always sacrifice the welfare, and even the subsistence of his family; yet, in his repentance on the bed of pain and languor, his mother forgot and forgave all she had suffered from him; and when he died, she wept for him as the child of her early affection, whose birth and infancy had once formed her greatest felicity.—In shedding tears over an object once so beloved by her husband, she seemed a second time to have lost him; and the first subject to which she attended, was to have his remains deposited

posited with those of his father, in the family vault at West Wolverton.

In this Orlando determined that she should at all events be gratified, whatever inconvenience might in their present narrow circumstances arise from the expence: he gave therefore directions accordingly; when he found that Mr. Woodford took upon him to oppose this wish of his mother, in a way so rude and savage, that after very high words had passed between him and his uncle (in which Woodford reproached Orlando with all the pecuniary favours he had bestowed upon his family, and ridiculed his beggarly marriage), Orlando at the last part of his conversation entirely lost his temper, and desired the unfeeling man of consequence to leave the house.

He had then the additional difficulty of concealing this disagreement from his mother, and of finding the means to supply that deficiency which this cruelty of his uncle would create.—The little sum left of his commission, after paying some late expences of his brother's and for his own lodgings,

lodgings, was reduced within thirty pounds, in which consisted his whole fortune. His uncle, who had till now contributed yearly to the support of his mother and his sisters, now protested that he would do no more. From his eldest sister married in Ireland, who had a family of her own, very trifling assistance only could be expected; and Warwick could not provide for his own family. Thus Orlando saw, that on an income of hardly an hundred a year, his mother and his two unmarried sisters were to live; and that Monimia and her family, whom he could not think of suffering to be any additional burthen to them, could have no other dependence than on his exertions; yet into what way of life to enter, or where to seek the means of providing for them, he knew not.

Sad were his reflections on the past, on the present, and on the future, when he set out with the melancholy procession that was to convey the remains of his deceased brother to the last abode of the Somerive family; and little was the correspondence

correspondence between his internal feelings and the beauty of the season, which gave peculiar charms to the country through which he passed.—The tears of the family he had left, of which Monimia was during his absence to be a part, seemed to have deprived him of the power of shedding a tear; but with eyes that gloomily surveyed the objects around him, without knowing what he saw, he reached at the close of the second day's journey West Wolverton; and at a little alehouse, the only one in the village, the funeral stopped that night, while Orlando went out alone to direct what yet remained of the necessary preparations.

It was a beautiful still evening, towards the end of May; but the senses of the unhappy Orlando were shut to all the pleasures external objects could bestow.—When he had visited the church, and spoken to the curate, he walked back towards the house once his father's. The grass was grown in the court, and half the windows were bricked up: the greater part of the shrubs

shrubs in the garden were cut; and the gates out of repair and broken. All wore an appearance of change and of desolation, even more deplorable, in the opinion of Orlando, than the spruce alterations, and air of new-born prosperity, which, on his former visit, he had remarked as the effect of Mr. Stockton's purchase.

Pain, and even horrors, were grown familiar to Orlando; and he seemed to have a gloomy satisfaction in the indulgence of his melancholy. He opened, therefore, the half-fallen gate, that led from a sort of lawn, that surrounded the house, to the shrubbery and pleasure ground, and entered the walk which he had so often traversed with his father, and where he had taken his last leave of him on his departure for America.

—The moon, not yet at its full, shed a faint light on every object: he looked along a sort of vista of shrubs, which seemed to have been left merely because they were not yet wanted as firing; and the moonlight, at the end of this dark avenue of cypress and gloomy evergreens, seemed par-

tially to illuminate the walk, only to shew him the spectre of departed happiness. He remembered with what pleasure his father used to watch the growth of these trees, which he had planted himself; and with what satisfaction he was accustomed to consider them, as improving for Philip.—Sad reverse!—The father, who thus fondly planned future schemes of felicity for his son, long since mouldered in the grave, whither that son himself, after having been but too accessory to the premature death of this fond parent, was now, in the bloom of life, precipitated by his own headlong folly.

A temper so sanguine as that of Orlando, possesses also that sensibility which arms with redoubled poignancy the shafts of affliction and disappointment. He felt, with cruel acuteness, all the calamities which a few short years had brought upon his family:—all their hopes blasted—their fortune gone—their name almost forgotten in the country—and strangers possessing their habitations. He now remembered that he

used to think, that, were he once blessed with Monimia, every other circumstance of life would be to him indifferent ; yet she was now his—she was more beloved, as his wife, than she had ever been as his mistress ; and the sweetness of her temper, the excellence of her heart, the clearness of her understanding, and her tender attachment to him, rendered her infinitely dearer to him than that beauty which had first attracted his early love. But far from being rendered indifferent to every other circumstance, he felt that much of his present concern arose from the impossibility he found of sheltering his adored creature from the evils of indigence ; and that the romantic theory, of sacrificing every consideration to love, produced, in the practice, only the painful consciousness of having injured its object.

It was late before the unhappy wanderer returned to the place where he was to attempt to sleep ; but the mournful ceremony of the next day, added to the gloomy thoughts he had been indulging, deprived

him of all inclination to repose; and as he saw the sun arise which was to witness the interment of his brother—how different appeared its light now, from what it used to do, when from the same village, in the house of his father, he beheld it over the eastern hills, awakening him to hope and health—to the society of a happy cheerful family—and to the prospect of meeting his little Monimia, then a child, who innocently expressed the delight she felt in seeing him!

But to indulge these painful reflections appeared to him unmanly, while they were likely to disable him from the exercise of the melancholy duties before him. These at length over, he found himself, in despite of all his philosophy, so much depressed, that he could not determine to return that night towards London; but sending away the undertaker's people, and retaining for himself the horse on which one of them had rode, he resolved to pass the rest of the day in gratifying the strange inclination he had long felt, to wander about Rayland Park,

to visit the Hall, and take a last leave of that scene of his early happiness, the turret once inhabited by Monimia.

This plan would detain him from her another day ; but he felt an invincible inclination to make this farewell visit, which he knew Monimia herself would wish him to indulge. Having therefore disengaged himself from the gloomy duties of the day, and sent a few lines to his mother and Monimia, to account for his absence, if the man who carried it should arrive in town before him, he set out towards evening for the Hall, flattering himself that, as he was now known, and made a better appearance than on his former visit, he should without difficulty obtain admittance to the house.— In this, however, he was mistaken : he found many of the windows bricked up, the œconomy of the present possessors not allowing them to pay so heavy a window tax : the old servants hall below was entirely deprived of light ; and hardly a vestige remained of inhabitants, in the grass-grown courts and silent deserted offices.

Orlando, after waiting for some time at the door, before he could make any one hear, saw at length the same sturdy clown he had before spoken to, who asked him in a surly tone his business.—Orlando replied, that he desired to be allowed to see the house. The man answered, that he had positive orders from Dr. Hollybourn to shew the house to nobody; and he shut the door in his face.

Thus repulsed, Orlando only felt a more determined resolution to gratify himself by a visit to the library, the chapel, and the turret; and he went round the house with an intention to enter without permission by the door that opened near the former out of the summer parlour—Here, however, he was again disappointed: this door, as well as the windows in the same line with it, was nailed up, and boarded on the inside; and while Orlando, thus baffled, was examining the other wing of the house, to see if he could not there obtain entrance, the man who guarded it looked from a window above, and told him, that if any body was seen
about

about the house he should fire at them, for that "nobody had no business there."

From the savage brutality of his manner, Orlando had little doubt but that he would act as he said; yet, far from fearing his fire-arms, he told him that he would see the house at all events, and that opposition would only serve to give more trouble, but not deter him from his purpose. He then attempted to bribe this guardian of the property of the church, and offered him a handful of silver: but his answer was, that he should fetch his blunderbuss.

Orlando now thought that it would be better to return to West Wolverton, and to write to a lawyer in the neighbourhood, employed by Dr. Hollybourn in the management of the estate, requesting leave to see the house; though he foresaw that it would be difficult to make such a man comprehend the sort of sensations that urged him to this request—and that it was possible he might impute his desire of visiting the Hall to motives that might make him refuse his permission.—Resolved however to try, he

returned slowly and disconsolate through the park; and observed, as he reached the side of it next the lake, that in the copse that clothed the hill many of the large trees were felled, and some others marked for the axe.—His heart became more heavy than before; and when he reached the seat near the boat-house in the fir-wood, which was now indeed broken down, he rested a moment against the old tree it had once surrounded, to recover from the almost insupportable despondence which oppressed him.

Absorbed in the most melancholy thoughts, every object served to increase their bitterness—He listened to sounds once so pleasing with anguish of heart bordering upon despair, and almost wished that he had been drowned in this water when a boy, by the accident of falling from a boat as he was fishing on the lake, from whence his father's servant had with difficulty saved him.

In such contemplations he remained for some time, with his eyes fixed on the water, when

when he saw reflected in its surface the image of some object moving along its bank.—The figure, from the gentle waving of the water as it approached the shore, was not distinct; and its motion so slow and singular, that the curiosity of Orlando was somewhat awaked. As it came nearer to him, therefore, he stepped forward, and saw advancing with difficulty on his crutches the old beggar whom he had met in a barn in Hampshire four months since, when he waited for communication with Mrs. Roker.

However surprised Orlando was at the appearance of this person, the man himself seemed to have expected to meet him; for, advancing towards him as speedily as his mutilated frame would allow, he exclaimed, “Ah! my dear master! well met: I have found you at last.”

“Have you been looking for me then, my old friend?”

“Aye, marry have I—and many a weary mile have my leg and my crutches hopped after your honour—Why, mun, I’ve been

up at London after you ; and there, at the house where you give me a direction to, I met a Neger man, who would not believe, like a smutty-faced son of a b——h as he is, that such a poor cripple as I could have to do to speak with you—and so all I could get of him was telling me that you were come down here—I knows this country well enough ; and so I e'en set off, and partly one way, and partly another, I got down and have found you out."

Orlando, not gueffing why this wandering veteran had taken so much trouble—was about, however, to ask what he could do for him, when the old man, putting on an arch look, and feeling in the patched pocket of what had once been a coat, said—

" And so now, master, since we be met, I hopes with all my heart I brings you good news—There—There's a letter for you from Madam Roker—A power of trouble, and many a cold night's waiting I had to get it : but let an old soldier alone—Egad, when once I had got it, I was bent upon putting

putting it into no hands but yours, for fear of more tricks upon travellers."

Orlando, in greater emotion than a letter from such a lady was likely to produce, took it, and unfolding two or three dirty papers in which it was wrapped, he broke the seal, and read these words:

"DEAR SIR,

"I AM sorry to acquaint you that Mr. Roker is by no means so grateful to me as I had reason to expect from the good fortune I brought him, and indeed from his assurances when I married him of his great regard and affection for me. I cannot but say that I am cruelly treated at present. As to Mr. Roker, he passes all his time in London, and I have too much cause to fear that very wicked persons are enjoying too much of the money which is mine—a thing so wicked, that, if it was only for his soul's sake, I cannot but think it my duty to prevent: but, to add to my misfortune herein, his relations give out that I am *non compos mentis*; which to be sure I might be rec-

koned when I bestowed my fortune on such an undeserving family, and made such sacrifices for Mr. Roker, as I am now heartily sorry for.—Sir, I have read in Scripture, that it is never too late to repent ; and I am sure, if I have done you a great injury, I do repent it from the bottom of my soul, and will make you all the reparation in my power : and you may believe I am in earnest in my concern, when I hereby trust you with a secret, whereon perhaps my life may depend : for, besides that I don't know how far I might be likely to be punished by law for the unjust thing Mr. Roker persuaded me to consent to—against my conscience I am sure—I know that he would rather have me dead than to speak the truth ; and 'tis for that reason, for fear I should be examined about the will of my late friend, Mrs. Rayland, that he insists upon it I am at this time a lunatic, and keeps me under close confinement as such.

“ Oh! Mr. Orlando, there is a later will than that which was proved, and which gave away from you all the Rayland estate
—and

—and with shame and grief I say, that when my Lady died I read that copy of it she gave to me; and finding that I had only half as much as in a former will, I was over-persuaded by Mr. Roker, who had too much power over me, to produce only the other, and to destroy in his presence that copy which my Lady had given to me to keep, charging me to send it, if any thing happened to her, to your family.—I did not then know the contents, which she had always kept from me: and I am sure I should never have thought of doing as I did but for Mr. Roker—I hope the Lord will forgive me!—and that you, dear Sir, will do so likewise, since I have not only been sincerely repentant of the same, but have, luckily for us both, kept it in my power to make you, I hope, reparation.

“After the decease of my late dear Lady, Mr. Roker had the other will proved; and Dr. Hollybourn and he agreed together in all things. Mr. Roker, to whom I was married, was very eager after every box of papers, and almost every scrap belonging
to

to Mrs. Rayland; but I thought him, even in those early days, a little too much in a hurry to take possession of all the jewels, and rings, and effects, of which I had the care; and did not see why, as they were mostly mine, I should give them entirely up to him; seeing that I had already given him my fortune—and that such things belong to a woman, and in no case to her husband.—This being the case, I own, I did not put into his hands some of these things, nor a small rose-wood box of my Lady's, in which she always kept some lockets, and miniature pictures, and medals, and other such curiosities, and some family papers. Mr. Roker never saw this box, nor did I ever have the keys of it, for there are two belonging to it with a very particular lock; my late Lady always kept them in her purse; and it was only after her decease that they came into my possession; and thereupon opening the box, which Mr. Roker knew nothing of, I found a paper sealed up and dated in my Lady's own hand, and indorsed —“ Duplicate of my last Will and Testament,

ment, to be delivered to Orlando Somerive, or his Representative."—I assure you that I had repented me before of the thing I had done in destroying the will, and now resolved to keep it in my power always to make you amends, by taking care of this ; which I, knowing I could not do so if I had it in my own possession, put therefore into this box again, with the medals and family papers, and some jewels of no great value, but which I thought would be no harm to make sure of—because, as the proverb observes, things are in this world uncertain at best ; and we all know where we eat our first bread, but none can tell where they shall eat their last. Mr. Roker was at that time a fond and affectionate husband ; but men are but fickle, even the very best, and none can tell what may befall ; by bad people especially, who are so wicked to meddle and interfere between man and wife, to destroy all matrimonial comfort, as is too often the case.

“ Mr. Roker thought then of residing at
the

the Hall as steward for the Bishop, &c.; but Dr. Hollybourn not being agreeable thereto, it was settled otherwise: only Mr. Roker and I were to go once a year to the Court holding for Manors, and to overlook the premises till they were disposed of, according to the will of my Lady which was proved, which the worthy Divines seemed not to be in a great hurry to do—Whereupon, as I did not choose for many reasons to carry this small box about with me, I put it into a place of safety in the house.

“ If you have not forgot old times, Mr. Orlando, you know very well that Rayland Hall, which belonged to such famous cavaliers in the great rebellion, has a great many secret stair-cases, and odd passages, and hiding-places in it; where, in those melancholy times, some of my late Lady’s ancestors, who had been in arms for the blessed Martyr and King, Charles the Second, were hid by others of the family after the fight at Edgehill, &c.—which I have heard my Lady oftentimes recount:

but, nevertheless, I do not know that she herself knew all those places.

“ By the side of my bed, in that chamber hung partly with scarlet and gold printed leather, and partly with painting in panels, where there is a brown mohair bed lined with yellow silk, you may remember a great picture of the Lady Alithea, second wife of the first Sir Hildebrand Rayland, with her two sons and a dog—She was an Earl’s daughter, and a celebrated beauty, and great great grandmother to my late Lady. The picture is only a copy from that in the great gallery, and done, as I have heard my Lady say, by some painter of that time when he was a young man—so that, as there was another, this was not hung in the gallery. Close under that picture there seems to be a hanging of gilt leather : but this is only fastened with small hooks : and under it is a sliding oak board, which gives into a closet where there is no light—but a very narrow stair-case goes from it through the wall, quite round to the

the other side of the house, and into other hiding-places, where one or two persons might be hid for years, and nobody the wiser.

“ Now, Sir, in a sort of hollow place about three feet wide, made like an arch under the thick wall in this closet, is a tin box with a padlock—and in that box this inlaid rose-wood box or casket. There you will find the real will of my Lady, and I hope all you wish and expect in it; and what I desire of you in return is, that you will take means to convince the world that I am not to blame; and that I am not a lunatic; and you have so much honour, that I rely upon your promises not to injure me if it should be in your power; but to make me amends for what I thus lose for your sake and the sake of justice—as in your letter you faithfully promise.

“ For that poor unfortunate young woman, the daughter of my deceased kinf-woman, I do assure you that, if I knew what was become of her, I would give you
notice.

notice. But she has never been heard of that I know of for a great many months—and I am afraid, from her flippant ways with my Mr. Roker before I was forced to send her away, has taken to courses very disgraceful, and which have made her unworthy of your farther thoughts. God forgive me if I judge amiss herein!—We must be charitable one towards another, as the Scripture says, poor sinful mortals, who have so much to answer for ourselves, as to be sure all of us have!

“ And now, dear Sir, I take my leave, having been four days writing this long letter by fits and snatches, when Mr. Roker’s sister, who even sleeps in my room, has been out of the way; for she watches me like a jailor, and I am quite a prisoner: and have not pen and ink but by stealth. If I were to attempt to send this to the post, all would be lost: so I have trusted it to old Hugh March the beggar, by means of the servant girl, and I have given the old man the three keys. Heartily wishing you health and happiness I recommend myself
to

to your prayers, as mine are for your success, and remain, dear Sir,

Your affectionate humble servant,

RACHEL ROKER."

"P. S. Pray let me hear speedily by the bearer."

Orlando read this strange confession, this avowal of iniquity so black, mingled with appeals to Heaven, and sentences of religion, with such a palpitating heart, that, when he had finished it, he looked around him to discover whether he was alive—The objects about him seemed real—He saw the old man before him, who, after a long search in his other pocket, produced the three keys; and then pulling off the relics of an hat from his grey head, bowed with an air of much humility, and cried, "Well, and what says my young master?—Does his lame messenger bring him bad news or good?—Ah, your honour is a noble gentleman, and will reward your old soldier!"

"That I will, my honest fellow! to the utmost of your wishes, as soon as I have discovered

discovered whether all this is real; but it seems to me at present that I am in a dream."

"Wide awake, depend upon it," answered the beggar;—"so come, dear young gentleman! will you go back to yon ale-house, and let us see what the good news will do for us?—I do not very well know, indeed, what it is; but I know that I was promised that you could do me a power of good, if I delivered the letter and the keys safe.—You know I had promised afore to serve you by night and by day, and so I have." "Serve me a little longer, my brave old man!" said Orlando; "by preserving in the place we are going to the secrecy I desire of you, without which all may yet be lost.—Here, I will share my purse with you—Go back to the ale-house, order whatever you like, and shew them that you have money to pay for it.—Do not make use of my name, nor say a word about Mrs. Roker till I return.—I must go to the next town, to consult a friend I have there on the best steps to be taken; in
which

which if I succeed, I will make thee the very prince of old soldiers."

Orlando then put some guineas into his hand, and saw him take the way to the ale-house, less rejoiced at his future hopes of reward, than at the power of immediate gratification. He somewhat doubted his discretion, but thought that a very few hours would put it out of the power of any indiscretion to mar the happy effects of Mrs. Roker's repentance:—and to set about securing this advantage, he hastened to his friend Dawson, as he saw that too many precautions could not be taken in an affair so unusual and so important.

C H A P. XIII.

THE young man to whom Orlando now applied, was very sincerely his friend, and possessed an acute and penetrating mind.—He saw at once all the importance of the business, and the hazard Orlando would incur by the smallest delay. Mrs. Roker's letter evidently expressed a mind fluctuating between resentment towards her husband, and unwillingness to acknowledge the folly she had committed in marrying him ; and as no great dependence could be placed on the repentance of a person under the influence of such a contrariety of passions, there was reason to fear that her love, or, what she fancied so, her pride, her avarice, and her fear, might unite to conquer the compunction she had shewn, and to make her discover the steps she had taken to her husband.

Dawson

Dawson advised therefore an immediate application to a justice of peace, for a warrant to search the house that night ; and as there was none resident in the town, Orlando set out with him in a post-chaise for the house of a magistrate, about seven miles distant, who had formerly been much acquainted with the Somerive family, and had been always full of professions of regard for them.

To this man, now in much higher affluence than formerly, by the acquisition of the fortunes of some of his relations, Dawson opened the business on which they came.

But here he had occasion to remark the truth of that observation *, which, whoever has seen many vicissitudes of fortune, must have too often beheld, as a melancholy evidence of the depravity of our nature, " That in the misfortunes of our best friends, there is something not displeasing to us."—Far from appearing to rejoice at the probability which now offered itself,

* Of La Rochefoucault.

that the son of his old friend would be restored to the right of his ancestors, and from depressing indigence be raised to high prosperity, this gentleman seemed to take pains to throw difficulties in his way :—he doubted the letter from Mrs. Roker; he doubted the legality of his granting a warrant; and it was not till after considerable delay, and long arguments, that he was at length prevailed upon to lend to Orlando the assistance of the civil power, without the immediate exertion of which, it seemed possible that his hopes might be again baffled.

Orlando was not without apprehensions, that this worthy magistrate might send immediate information of what was passing to Dr. Hollybourn; and he determined, late as it was, to go to Rayland Hall that night. He set forward, therefore, attended by Dawson, two other young men of the same town, who were eager for his success, and the persons who were to execute the warrant. It was midnight when they arrived at the Hall—All was profoundly silent around it, and it had no longer the appear-

ance of an inhabited house. The summons, however loud, was unanswered. As the men rapped violently at the old door of the servants hall, the fullen sounds murmured through the empty courts, and to their call only hollow echoes were returned. These attempts to gain admittance were repeated again and again without effect, and they began to conclude, that there was nobody within the house; but at length some of them going round to another part of the house, the man who had the charge of it looked out of a window, and demanded their business.

Upon hearing there was a warrant and a constable, the fellow, who had deeply engaged in the same sort of business as that which used to be carried on by Pattenfon and Company, imagined immediately that he had been informed against : but as there was no remedy, he came down with fear and trembling to open the door ; and it was a great relief to him to learn, that it was only for a paper, which might occasion the house to change its master, but not for any

of his effects that the intended search was to be made. The posse now proceeded to the place indicated by the letter of Mrs. Roker—the constable, a most magisterial personage, marching by the side of Orlando, while Dawson and his friends followed, with candles in their hands; and as silently they ascended the great stair-case, and traversed the long dark passages that led towards the apartment in question, Orlando could not, amid the anxiety of such a moment, help fancying, that the scene resembled one of those so often met with in old romances and fairy tales, where the hero is by some supernatural means directed to a golden key, which opens an invisible drawer, where a hand or an head is found swimming in blood, which it is his business to restore to the enchanted owner. With a beating heart, however, he saw the picture of the Lady Alithea removed, and the sliding board appears. On entering the closet, the tin box, covered with a green cloth, was discovered. The key which Orlando possessed opened it, and the

casket was within it; which he unlocked, in presence of all the persons present, and saw the important paper, exactly as it had been described by Mrs. Roker.

He now debated whether he should open it; but at length, with the advice of his friend Dawson, determined not to do so till his arrival in London. Replacing every thing else as it was found, and securing the closet and the room that led to it, he now hastened to reward the persons who had attended him on this search—and without resting, set out post with Dawson for London, where they arrived at nine o'clock the next morning.

Orlando hastened immediately to the house of his mother, with sensations very different from those with which he had quitted it.—He found Monimia alone in the dining room, pensively attentive to the two children of Isabella, who were playing on the carpet.—She received him with that degree of transport which shewed itself in tears; nor could he prevail upon her for a moment or two to be more composed, and

to

to answer his enquiries after his mother and his sisters.—She at length told him, that Mrs. Somerive had been so much affected by the visits her brother had made during his absence, by his reproaches for her false indulgence to both her sons, and by his total dislike to the marriage of Orlando (which he had represented as the most absurd folly, and as the utter ruin of his nephew) and by the disposition he (Mr. Woodford) shewed to withdraw all assistance from her and her two youngest daughters, if she did not wholly withdraw all countenance both from Orlando and Isabella, that Mrs. Somerive was actually sinking under the pain such repeated instances of cruelty had inflicted; and had determined, rather than continue to be obliged to a brother who was capable of thus empoisoning the favours her circumstances obliged her to accept, to quit London, discharge all but one servant, and to retire to some cheap part of Wales or Scotland, where the little income she possessed might be more sufficient to their support.

Orlando, who felt that some precaution was necessary, in revealing to Monimia the fortunate reverse that now presented itself, was considering how to begin this propitious discovery, when his mother, who eagerly expected him, having learned from the servants that he was arrived, sent down Selina to beg to see him.

She put back the curtain as he came into the room ; and held out her hand to him, but was unable to speak.—The mournful particulars she expected, which however she had not courage to ask, filled her heart with bitterness, and her eyes with tears.

Orlando, affected by the looks and the pathetic silence of his mother, kissed with extreme emotion the hand she gave him—He thanked her, after a moment's silence, for her goodness to Monimia during the few days of his absence ; and entreated her to be in better spirits. He then gradually discovered to her, by a short and clear relation of what had happened, the assurance he now had, which the transactions of that evening

evening would, he hoped, confirm, of a speedy change in their circumstances.

The heart of Mrs. Somerive, so long accustomed only to sorrow and solicitude, was no longer sensible of those acute feelings which agitate the warm and sanguine bosom of youth ; but to hear that her children, for whom only she wished to live, were likely to be at once rescued from the indigence which impended over them, and secured in affluence and prosperity, could not be heard with calmness. At length both herself and her son acquired composure enough to consider of the proper steps to be taken. Every person interested was summoned to attend that evening at the house of Mrs Somerive, who found herself animated enough to be present at the opening of the will, at which all who were sent for were present, except Doctor Hollybourn (who sent his attorney) and the Rokers. The elder only sent a protest against it by his clerk ; and the younger thought it safer immediately to disappear.

It was found on the perusal of this im-

portant paper, and the codicils belonging to it, that, with the exception of five thousand pounds, and two hundred a-year for her life, to her old companion Leonard, Mrs. Rayland had given every thing she possessed, both real and personal, to Orlando, without any other restriction than settling the whole of the landed estate of the Rayland family on his male heirs, and appropriating a sum of money to purchase the title of a Baronet, and for an act to enable him to take and bear the name and arms of Rayland only.

The subsequent proceedings were easy and expeditious. Against a will so authenticated all opposition was vain; and within three weeks Orlando was put in possession of his estate, and Doctor Hollybourn obliged, with extreme reluctance, not only to deliver up all of which he and his brother had taken into their hands, but to refund the rents and the payments for timber; which operation went to the poor Doctor's heart. There are some men who have such an extreme affection for money, even when it does not belong to them, that they cannot

not determine to part with it when once they get possession of it. Of this order was the worthy Doctor; who, with charity and urbanity always in his mouth, had an heart rendered callous by avarice, and a passion for the swinish gratifications of the table, to which the possession of Rayland Hall, the gardens and hot-houses of which he alone kept up, had lately so considerably contributed, that he could not bear to relinquish them; and actually suffered so much from mortification that he was obliged to go to Bath to cure a bilious illness, which vexation and gluttony contributed to bring on.

Orlando lost no time in rescuing the unfortunate Mrs. Roker from the hands of her tyrant; who, in order to incapacitate her from giving that testimony which he knew was in her power, and with which she often had threatened him, had taken out against her a commission of lunacy. It was superseded on the application of Orlando, who himself immediately conducted Mrs. Roker to Rayland Hall; where he put her in possession of the apartments she had formerly

formerly occupied; and employed her to superintend, as she was still active and alert, the workmen whom he directed to repair and re-furnish the house, and the servants whom he hired to prepare it for the reception of its lovely mistress. He forbore to pursue Roker himself, as he might have done; having no pleasure in revenge, and being rather solicitous to give to those he loved future tranquillity, than to avenge on others those past misfortunes, which perhaps served only to make him more sensible of his present felicity.

Fortune, as if weary of the long persecutions the Somerive family had experienced, seemed now resolved to make them amends by showering her favours upon every branch of it. Warwick had hardly rejoiced a week in the good fortune of Orlando, when he received a summons to attend General Tracy; who, quite exhausted by infirmity, saw the end of his life approaching, and sacrificed his resentment, which time had already considerably weakened. He was not, however, yet able to see Isabella; but his
pride

pride had been alarmed by the accounts he had received of Warwick's distressed circumstances, and above all, of his having a play coming forward at one of the theatres; which, though it was to pass as the work of an unknown young author, with a supposititious name, was well known to be, and publicly spoken of as his. That *his* nephew—that the nephew of an Earl should become an author and write for support, was so distressing to the haughty spirit of the old soldier, that though he saw many examples of the same thing in people of equal rank, he could not bear it; and the very means his brother's family took to irritate him against Warwick, by informing him of this circumstance, contributed more than any thing else to the resolution he formed of seeing his nephew, and restoring him to his favour. Warwick immediately agreed to withdraw his play. His uncle burnt the will by which he had been disinherited, and died about five months afterwards, bequeathing to his two boys by Isabella, all his landed estates, after their father,

father, who was to enjoy them, together with his great personal property, for his life.

In the mean time the happy Orlando had conducted his lovely wife, his mother and his sisters, to Rayland Hall ; where, without spoiling that look of venerable antiquity for which it was so remarkable, he collected within it every comfort and every elegance of modern life. With what grateful transports did he now walk with Monimia over the park, and talk with her of their early pleasures and of their severe subsequent sufferings ! and how sensible did these retrospects render them both of their present happiness !

Orlando was only a few weeks in undisputed possession of his estate, before he presented to each of his sisters five thousand pounds ; and to add to his power of gratifying his mother, it happened that very soon after his arrival at Rayland Hall Mr. Stockton died, the victim of that intemperance which exorbitant wealth and very little understanding had led him into. As he had no children, his very large property was divided among distant relations,

his joint-heirs; Carloraine Castle was sold, pulled down by the purchaser, and the park converted into farms; and in this division of property, the house and estate at West Wolverton, formerly belonging to the Somerive family, were to be sold also. This his paternal house had been inhabited by farmers, under tenants of Stockton, when Orlando's last melancholy visit was paid to it. He now purchased it; and putting it as nearly as he could into the same state as it was at the death of his father, he presented it to his mother with the estate around it; and thither she went to reside with her two youngest daughters, though they all occasionally paid visits to the Hall, particularly Selina, of whom Orlando and his Monimia were equally fond.

Incapable of ingratitude, or of forgetting for a moment those to whom he had once been obliged, Orlando was no sooner happy in his restored fortune, than he thought of the widow of his military friend Fleming. To Fleming himself he owed it, that he existed at all;—to his widow, that an existence
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so preserved, had not been rendered a curse by the estrangement or loss of Monimia.

One of the first uses therefore that he made of his assured prosperity, was, to remove from this respectable protectress of his beloved Monimia, the mortifications and inconveniencies of very narrow circumstances. He wrote to her, entreating to see her at the Hall with her children, and that she would stay there at least till after the accession of happiness he was to expect in the autumn. Towards the middle of September, Mrs. Fleming and her younger children arrived; and in a few days afterwards Monimia's gallant young friend the sailor, to whom she owed her providential introduction to Mrs. Fleming, unexpectedly made his appearance. He returned from a very successful cruise; he was made a lieutenant, and had obtained leave of absence for ten days, to comfort with these tidings the heart of his widowed mother; when, not finding her at her usual habitation in the New Forest, he had followed her to Rayland Hall, where he was a most welcome guest.

This

This young man, who was in disposition and in figure the exact representative of his father, could not long be insensible of the charms of the gentle Selina; and he spoke to Orlando of the affection he had conceived for her, with his natural sincerity. Orlando, who never felt the value of what he possessed, so much as when it enabled him to contribute to the happiness of his friends, seized with avidity an offer which seemed so likely to constitute that of his beloved sister; and he had the happiness in a few days of discovering that the old sea officer, Fleming's relation and patron, was so well pleased with his gallant behaviour in the engagement he had lately been in, that he had determined to make him his heir, and most readily consented to make a settlement upon him more than adequate to the fortune Orlando had given his sister; and it was settled that Selina and Lieutenant Fleming should in a few months be united.

Orlando was very soon after made completely happy by the birth of a son, to whom he gave his own name, and who
seemed

seemed to render his charming mother yet more dear to all around her. Every subsequent hour of the lives of Orlando and his Monimia was marked by some act of beneficence; and happy in themselves and in their connections, their gratitude to Heaven for the extensive blessings they enjoyed, was shewn in contributing to the cheerfulness of all around them.

In the number of those who felt the sunshine of their prosperity, and prayed for its continuance, no individual was more sincere in his joy, or more fervent in repeated expressions of it, than the useful old military mendicant, whose singular services Orlando rewarded by making him the tenant for life of a neat and comfortable lodge in his park—an arrangement that gratified both the dependent and his protector.—Orlando never passed through his own gate without being agreeably reminded, by the grateful alacrity of this contented servant, of his past afflictions, and his present felicity.

F I N I S.



